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Former Captain Luis Carlos Montalván and his service dog, Tuesday. See pg. 7
Dear friends:
I assume everyone is like me, at least in Midwest USA. I wake up every day and turn on the morning news to find out what has happened between the 10 p.m. news and the 7 a.m. news. Another Ebola case? Another tragic death in the Middle East? More overnight protests in Ferguson? Rising river floodwaters in some American city? Another politically-fueled resignation? I admit I am a bit of a news-hound and I’m increasingly aware that my mood seems to be dictated by the morning news reports. When I don’t turn on the news in the morning, instead I roll over and reach out for my spouse and remind myself that I’m the damn-luckiest man in America. It’s easy to feel that way when you’re a person of privilege in America like I am: white, middle income, and male. Sure, I’m getting old but instead of viewing it as dis privilege, I find myself thinking, instead, “oh, senior discount at the movies tonight!” Luckily, I’m also an optimist. But I was jarred from my optimistic complacency when the October issue of the NASW News arrived in my mailbox last week and I was confronted by the headline “Child Immigrant Crisis” and a picture of a man hoisting a young immigrant boy (maybe 5 years old?) onto a freight car as Central Americans board a northbound train in Ixtepec, Mexico. Looking at the picture of the young boy, I instinctively asked myself “Could I put my grandson, Asher (age 5), onto a freight car with only the bars at the end of the car to hang onto for that long perilous ride, risking his life?” Yet I know I’m only reinforcing my privilege even asking myself the question: the life of my grandson and the life of this little boy in the NASW picture are worlds-of-privilege apart. The only train my grandson knows is the small one that takes him around the inside of the San Diego zoo. The immigrant crisis was more on my mind last week, in particular, when the School hosted its 16th annual conference devoted to “strengthening and valuing Latino/a communities in Iowa.” In addition to the Professional Development Institute, the conference included a high-school youth summit, whose keynoter, Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch, affirmed the self-worth and pride of every young person in the audience. It was a powerful testimony to Latino families. Students also experienced traditional Aztec/Mexica dance, drum, culture and history though a presentation by the Milwaukee-based Omeyocan Dance Company. The students had many other opportunities during the day to embrace and celebrate their cultural identity. For many, it was their first time on the UI campus. I hoped just being here on campus would affirm the “rightness” of being here in their future. Meanwhile, the adult workshops were focused on fair housing, poverty, wealth and employment, health and wellbeing, immigration, Civil Rights mandates and English Only. I’m very proud the School, in its own way, is doing something very positive to address the causes and consequences of hoisting little boys and girls onto freight trains. We all have a role to play in challenging social and economic injustice. That is, after all, one of our core identities as social workers. Thank you for doing your part.

Warm regards,
Students in Service

Des Moines BA students Kaitlin Westphal and Amber Garrison wanted to raise community awareness of sexual assault and abuse by helping to plan Take Back the Night on April 5th. They recruited people with disabilities, older adults and college students to bring new faces to the annual walk. They gained experience for future community action projects and made useful contacts in the social work field.

Alicia Hasley, Bobbi Glenn and Melissa Stockbauer also participated in Take Back the Night, walking on behalf of Mothers Against Violence, a new grassroots community organization that is doing outreach to youth. They researched the impact that youth violence has on the community and ways community leaders can implement change.

Kelly Meany and Jillian Madsen wanted to focus on homeless youth in Des Moines for their Intro to Social Work Process community project. They walked in the St.Patty’s Day parade for the Youth and Emergency Shelter & Services’ fundraiser, Duck Derby. They also held their own fundraiser at K-Mart asking shoppers to contribute needed items for the youth shelter. They collected 91 items in only 3 hours.

BA students Katie Pypes, Kelsey Powell and Pete Aguilar presented a workshop on human trafficking at the Pappajohn Education Center in Des Moines. The workshop included keynote speaker Ruth Buckles, the AMP Statewide Coordinator of Youth Shelter & Services Inc. in Ames, as well as the documentary ‘Sex+Money: A National Search for Human Worth’.

The Harkin Steak Fry is a large political gathering that has occurred annually for the past 37 years. This year was especially important because our Senator Tom Harkin, who championed the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, is now retiring. It was important to be there to give him thanks for all the hard work he has done for Iowans. Being politically involved has always been important to me, and now that I have a four year old son, I want him to know the importance of it as well. I feel that being politically involved gives us a voice on the issues we want to see improved in our society. -Bonnie Brown, BASW student

Bonnie Brown & Akaisha Blackhawk

Elizabeth Hoifeldt, Jill Hunter and Amanda Rivera held a fundraising event to benefit Children and Families of Iowa. They set up a donation table outside Walmart in Ankeny and in one hour, all of their bins were overflowing. With the other bins they set up around town, they were able to more than double their original goal.

As part of the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities, MSW students Latasha Cardenas, Nataeas McGuire, Kayla Jacobs and Chris Betsworth, worked on a plan to increase Latino participation in Blue Zones and future health initiatives in the community of Muscatine. Their intervention methods included 1) allocating seats on leadership committees to Latino residents and 2) connecting a youth development group to community planning bodies to begin to develop leadership pipelines.

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Bonnie Brown & Akaisha Blackhawk
Sioux City Success Story

Jarrod Linn-In His Own Words

My interest in obtaining my MSW from the University of Iowa Sioux City program stemmed from the fact that I was unable to obtain any sort of competitive employment opportunities with a BSW due to my physical limitations, which are a result of quadriplegic cerebral palsy.

After graduating from Briarcliff University in 2001, I volunteered at the Crittenden Center for at-risk youth in Sioux City, for about a year. The duties I performed were dictating and writing discharge summaries for the social workers at the shelter; monitoring youth at the Boys and Girls Home and Family Services at the Sioux City location, as well as the shelter school. I also supervised visits and led topic driven teen groups.

While volunteering, a shelter supervisor informed me of an opportunity at The University of Iowa School of Social Work to obtain my MSW. The catch was that it was night classes and the buses don’t operate after 6 p.m. in Sioux City. Luckily, I had my own van that I could borrow from my parents. All I had to do was figure out who would drive me from my home to Briar Cliff, which was across town. Fortunately I had some services already in place. I was able to network with the service provider and convince them to pay someone from the agency to provide the services.

I spoke with Professor Julia Kleinschmit via e-mail several times. I explained to Julia that I use a wheelchair, and that the classes would need to be accessible. The program was is located at Briar Cliff University which was my undergraduate campus, so I was very comfortable with my surroundings.

Academically, my experiences with the program were very good. I decided to go into macro social work, which deals with systems and networks of people and services. This choice was very easy for me because I have personal experience with governmental and medical systems due to my physical limitations. I wanted to impact the lives of as many people as I could in my social work practice.

At first I didn’t think that I belonged in the program because of the accommodations I needed to succeed. Academically, I did more than okay with a 3.4 grade point average over the three years. All my written assignments were completed with voice activation and with as much help from the University library as possible. Also, I used the Briar Cliff library as much as possible because of its ease of accessibility.

For my internship I went to Opportunities Unlimited, an intermediate care facility for people with developmental disabilities, spinal cord injury and brain injury. The ironic thing about this internship was that I had been a client of OU from 1994 to 1999! Then in 2005-06 I was being asked to compile the data and write a client satisfaction survey for the previous year. I also compiled information about The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as well as developed a music appreciation and Spanish class for clients. I know that program from both sides extremely well.

Since graduation I have been asked to be a mentor to the current cohort of students, and I also gave an online presentation with Julia in the Diversity, Oppression and Discrimination class. I hope to provide as much assistance as possible to the Univer-

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After graduation I was still struggling to find employment until I went to a grant workshop in Sioux City hosted by SHIP. During the workshop I talked to Jim France, the director of the SHIP. I asked him how to go about finding a federal grant and he told me about grants.gov.

Apparently after the workshop, Jim and Julia contacted one another and Julia indicated that I had excellent research skills from my time at Iowa. Jim needed someone to research various organizations and foundations around the Siouxland area.

On December 27, 2007 I signed a six-month trial contract with SHIP. Six months later I signed a one-year contract. Since then I have signed a one-year contract every year with SHIP with no end in the foreseeable future!

In terms of goals for myself I’ve achieved every single one of them. I’m in the process of buying my own home and vehicle. I’m living as independently as possible and paying for everything myself. I have over 300 business contacts on the local, state and federal levels that I check consistently. I locate the grants, but I don’t write them because my voice activation software is inconsistent at times.

The only federal program I am still using is Medicaid for Employed Persons with Disabilities and my father’s Social Security, in order to afford my electric wheelchair, which costs an astronomical $25,000 every five years! I use some Iowa benefits for personal care but otherwise I am independent!

-Jarrod Linn, MSW 2006

Senator Tom Harkin gave the keynote address at the 2014 ADA Celebration in Iowa City. He was presented with the Bill Reagan Vitality Award in appreciation for his support of the disability community.

Professors Sandra McGee, and Motier Haskins were panelist presenters to an International Delegation of Women Activists from Bangladesh, here to examine Domestic Violence Prevention. CIVIC, the Council for International Visitors to Iowa Cities planned and hosted the event. Their goal was to hold a roundtable discussion on feminist praxis by bringing UI faculty, staff and community activists into conversation about preventing violence against women. In Bangladesh 87% of married women report being victims of domestic abuse.
Iowa Latino Conference

The 16th Iowa Latino Conference took place on October 3rd on the UI campus in Iowa City. Two hundred Latino/a high school students attended the Youth Development Summit and 107 adults gathered for the Professional Development Institute.

Raúl Curto, Executive Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, welcomed the group. The Omeyocan Dance Company provided the opening blessing with traditional Aztec dancing.

The keynote speaker, Consuelo Castillo Kickbush gave an emotional and inspirational speech that drew on the lessons of her humble beginnings growing up in a small barrio in Laredo, Texas, as the daughter of a maid. Empowered by her immigrant parents who impressed on her the richness of her culture, tradition, values and faith, she graduated from Hardin Simmons University and served for two decades in the as an officer in the Army, where she became the highest ranking Hispanic woman in the Combat Support Field.

The Professional Development Institute provided an opportunity for participants to become involved, gain mutual support, and learn that they have a voice in making a difference. The participants were provided the opportunity to build new relationships and explore new ways to collaborate with others.

Participants engaged in work teams to discuss relevant topics such as Civic Engagement; Leadership; Education; Health and Well-being; Employment, Housing and Entrepreneurship. The discussion and resulting action items were then used to form the basis of a working paper to help guide the strategic planning of the Iowa Commission on Latino Affairs. The outcomes of the brainstorming sessions by the 8 work teams as well as other documents can be viewed on the conference website at www.iowalatinoconference.org

Consuelo Kickbush talks with some youth during her workshop.

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Healing War Trauma

A group of 50 social work students and practitioners gathered on October 17th to hear four experts speak about their approaches to treating war-related trauma. Clinical Assistant Professor Yvonne Farley, LISW, joined three clinicians from the Iowa City VA Medical Center: Jeffrey Alden, MD; Timothy Mullaney, PhD, MSW, LMFT; and Jason Drwal, PhD. The continuing education workshop was part of a campus wide examination of the impact of war on individuals, families, communities and society, called ‘Worth Fighting For’.

That same evening the school hosted highly decorated former U.S. Army Captain Luis Carlos Montalván and his service dog, “Tuesday,” for a special presentation and book signing. Montalván discussed recovery from the effects of trauma and the symptoms related to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

With the assistance of his highly trained service dog, Luis continues to build bridges of hope and recovery in his healing process that extends to millions of people throughout North America and beyond.

Following 17-years of military service, multiple tours abroad, including two combat tours in Iraq, Montalván honorably departed the Army as a result of visible and invisible wounds sustained during combat.

Montalván is a well known speaker, advocate and award-winning author of the New York Times bestselling memoir, Until Tuesday: The Wounded Warrior and the Golden Retriever Who Saved Him and the widely acclaimed new children’s book, Tuesday Tucks Me In: The Loyal Bond between a Soldier and his Service Dog.

In his presentation, he referred to social work as the ‘most important profession in the 21st century’ particularly as it relates to the number of people who need help as a result of trauma. He reminded the audience that at least 22 veterans commit suicide every day and yet we hear very little about that in the media.

New PhD Students

Nadia Sabbagh- I had been in clinical practice for about four years when I seriously considered a PhD program. My professional life as a medical social worker was challenging and interesting, however, not entirely rewarding for me. I was proud of the work I was doing with my MSW but wanted to do more. I want to do health disparities research and be able to apply that knowledge to professional practice and policy. For me, a PhD offers the highest level of preparation for research and teaching, hopefully allowing me to make contributions to the knowledge base of the profession. I enjoy interdisciplinary team work in my clinical practice, and I appreciate that at Iowa the program encourages students to develop expertise in other disciplines outside of Social work such as Sociology, Psychology and Public Health. The strong faculty mentorship available at the University of Iowa School of Social Work was also very important to me.

Rebecca Dickinson- I am a clinical practitioner who specializes in play therapy. My mentor, Dr. Terry Kottman, developed Adlerian Play Therapy, which is the model I use. She is preparing me to become a leader in the play therapy field and to succeed her when she retires. In order to have the positions and respect necessary to be a leader in the play therapy world, a PhD was necessary. It was important to me to stay in the field of social work, as both my Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees are in social work. Social work is where my heart lies. The PhD program at Iowa appealed to me because it allows me to remain close to my family while pursuing the degree I need.

Interested in a PhD in Social Work?

Apply online by February 1st.

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Maggie Tinsman (MSW 1974) became aware of the issue of Human Trafficking in 2005 when, as an Iowa State Senator, she attended a State Department briefing in Washington, DC. It was then that she learned that only 13 states had laws against trafficking and Iowa wasn’t one of them.

Maggie then drafted legislation that made human trafficking a felony and after considerable lobbying and arm-twisting, the law was passed in 2006. Shortly thereafter a Quad Cities task force was created and that evolved into the non-profit organization Braking Traffik.

Commercial sex trafficking is the exploitation of any sexual activity in exchange for value, including, but not limited to, prostitution, pornography and performance in strip clubs.

Since its inception, Braking Traffik has given over 100 presentations throughout Iowa and Illinois. Through their awareness program ‘Traffik Jam’, they educated over 1,000 students during the 2012-13 school year. Their biggest obstacle is the persistent and erroneous belief that sex trafficking doesn’t occur in Iowa. In fact, with major highways like I-80 and I-35 running through rural areas, Iowa has the perfect conditions for trafficking. All ages can be trafficked but younger, vulnerable, teenage girls are in high demand.

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center received 443 hotline calls from Iowa between December 2007 and August 1, 2014. Nationally, an estimated 100,000 people are trafficked annually. The average age range of victims is 11-14.

Through false promises of love or jobs, victims are coerced and abused physically, sexually, and psychologically, through drugs and threats to their family. Sometimes they are kidnapped and sold across state lines. When prostituted they are forced to have sex with 7-15 men per day, with a nightly quota of $200-$1,000 and all the money is kept by the traffickers.

“Human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world because it’s more profitable than any other,” said Cathy O’Keeffe, executive director of Braking Traffik. “Each victim is worth up to $250,000 and can be sold over and over.”

In April, 2014, again through Maggie’s efforts, legislation aimed at strengthening penalties for human traffickers and providing aid to their victims, was passed unanimously in both the Iowa House and the Senate. The bill increased the penalty for pimping an underage prostitute from a class D to a class C felony, punishable by up to 10 years in prison. It also raised the penalty for purchasing the services of an underage prostitute from a misdemeanor to a felony. It gives prosecutors discretion in handling prostitution cases involving minors, allowing them to refer victims of human trafficking for social services as a CHINA, rather than bringing criminal charges against them. This provides them with protection from their parents who may be involved in the trafficking.

Additionally, a $1000 Human Trafficking Surcharge was created for those convicted of human trafficking violations. The money will be used to support groups who assist victims of human trafficking. The final version of the bill also extends the statute of limitations to prosecute certain crimes against children to ten years ensuring that more people who harm children will face punishment. Ignorance of the
victim’s age is no defense.

Brittney Phillips, a 14 year old girl from Des Moines was sexually abused by her mom’s boyfriend, so was placed in a treatment facility in Iowa City. She ran away, and ended up in Cedar Rapids where she encountered a series of men who repeatedly tried to sell or trade her for sex. She refused but agreed to a false modeling offer and was shipped to Chicago. There she was forced to have sex with people for money, had a gun held to her head and was told that if she ran away, they would find her and kill her. She was saved by an undercover officer who found her by posing as a customer.

At a workshop on the problem of Human Trafficking in Iowa in September, Mike Ferjack, Senior Criminal Investigator in the Iowa Attorney General’s Office provided some shocking statistics:

- 98% of sex trafficking victims are women and girls.
- It is the fastest growing industry, generating $32 billion a year, $12 billion in the US.
- 100,000 American children fall victim every year.
- Runaways, foster children, and abuse survivors are specifically targeted by traffickers.
- 1 in 3 runaway youth are approached for commercial sex within 48 hours of being on the street.
- More people are enslaved in the US today than at any other time in our history.

Because of its rapid growth, the Iowa Attorney General’s Office has made enforcement and prosecution of the law a high priority through their Human Trafficking Task Force and Operation Detour. They looked at three years of prostitution arrest records of those who were 18 and under and saw that most could be considered cases of human trafficking.

“We need to have a change in consciousness about this issue, within law enforcement and the public. These girls are not prostitutes. They are girls who have been prostituted,” Ferjack said. “We have 300 missing persons under age 18 every month in Iowa, plus 6,500 kids in foster care and 12,000 victims of abuse. Add to that 200 advertised escort services, 14 major truck stops, numerous phony massage parlors and sex shops, and you have a big problem.”

Social workers are probably more aware of the scope of the problem than any other profession. Unfortunately, the resources for safe shelter and long term treatment of trafficked children are very limited. Victims typically don’t self identify and they suffer traumatic bonding with their pimps. The girls are fearful, isolated, ashamed and distrustful of law enforcement and service providers.

Braking Traffik now has a documentary that features three Iowa survivors of trafficking which will help to convince youth that the problem is real. The popularity of the internet has put every middle and high school student at risk. Traffickers pose as peers and lure kids to meet them and then they are kidnapped and transported to distant cities and sold.

Maggie emphasizes that much more work is needed. “We need to increase awareness by publicizing the issue, fundraising, contacting legislators and getting involved. Above all, if you see something, say something, and contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline,” she said. 1-888-373-7888 or text BeFree

Breaking Traffik- http://brakingtraffik.org/
Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking- http://iowanaht.org
Polaris Project- www.polarisproject.org

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Alumni Updates

Madonna (Norris) Lechner, (BA 1972) has retired as a Team Leader in the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Chicago. In the spring of 2012 she received a B.A. in Music from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. “Professor H. Wayne Johnson encouraged me to overcome my natural shyness.”

Pamela Ross O’Malley, (MSW 1974). I am a Massachusetts licensed LICSW and currently work part time as a mental health counselor in nursing and rest homes. I am employed by a health organization - Arbour Health Systems and have done this work since retiring from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Dept of Children and Families in 1996. Arbour does the direct billing to the client’s insurance whether it be a private insurance policy, Medicare or Medicaid. It is a wonderful job.

I watched the History of the School of Social Work video and enjoyed it immensely. I hope to be able to return to the U of I campus at some point before I fully retire. I have many memories of the University as my first husband received his MFA from Iowa and I lived there during the 60’s as well as the time I spent at the School of Social Work.

Lauren (Schmeh) Keppel, (BA 2004).

You may have caught on today show.com, yahoo, huffington post or one of the other websites a story about a “flashmob for Amy”. This is Lauren’s mom and the story of how Lauren put together a surprise flashmob for her mom who has terminal cancer. Here is a link to one of the stories about this incredible and touching thing Lauren arranged for her mother to show her how much she is loved.

Submitted by Mary Roedl, Class of 2004

Chris Frey (MSW,1980) My article “Letting Go of Superman: Redefining Masculinity in the Wake of Cancer” is featured in the May/June 2014 issue of Coping with Cancer Magazine, both in paper and online.

Lindee Peterson, (BA 1978, MSW 1988)

Lindee attended the Creative Writing Seminar for Helping Professionals during the summer. It was her second time because she finds it so helpful! Also attending was Jon Palley, 1st Place winner of the National Poetry Contest for Social Workers.

Kelly Nissen, (MSW 1990). I am a therapist at The Counseling & Wellness Center in Iowa City offering mental health services to children and their families. I am currently the only Theraplay Therapist in Iowa. My practice focuses on developing secure attachments, addressing sensory processing difficulties, trauma, anxiety and regulation disorders. I am also a Behavioral Health Officer (Captain) in the Iowa National Guard where I provide assessment and referral services to soldiers related to their mental health needs and adjustment to family, civilian and military life. Prior to starting our clinical practice, I was employed for 23 years at UIHC as a therapist, medical social worker and care coordinator. I continue to work for UIHC on a PRN basis. Referrals can be directed to Kelly Nissen at 319-224-0112. Accepting BCBS and Medicaid referrals.

Chris Frey (MSW,1980) My article “Letting Go of Superman: Redefining Masculinity in the Wake of Cancer” is featured in the May/June 2014 issue of Coping with Cancer Magazine, both in paper and online.

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disciplinary team that advises the Cardinal on individual cases of clergy abuse and broader policy issues.

**Margaret Tyler** I graduated with my MSW in Family Based Services in 1995. Never got to use these credentials. Had a baby in 1996. She is now a lovely 18 year old. Stunning, really. Completed my RN a few months ago. Delighted to have both MSW and RN. Want to help patients as I can. All best wishes and we all love you.

**Bonnie K. Williams, (MSW 1980), PhD**

Bonnie is co-owner of Williams & Dunnigan, Associates in Counseling & Consulting, L.L.P., in Cedar Rapids, IA. She is an executive and life coach who helps people identify and reach their most important personal and professional goals; a consultant who works with the "human side" of businesses; and a therapist who counsels individuals, couples, and families regarding depression, anxiety, stress, loss/grief, life transitions, and relationship issues. She is certified to administer Real Colors temperament inventories and is trained in using clinical hypnosis for stress and anxiety management. Additionally, Bonnie has training and experience in working with families of great wealth. Bonnie is a graduate of the School of Social Work, and she also was a visiting assistant professor and adjunct faculty at the School of Social Work.

**Erin Doppelt** (BA 2014) is in the MSW program at Loyola University in Chicago focusing on School Social Work with a field placement in a Chicago public school.

**Cathy Beck-Cross, (MSW 1987)** I am employed at Grand View University, as assistant professor and program director for the new BSW program, which is in the candidacy process and anticipates accepting students in fall 2015. Award: Iowa Educational Research and Evaluation Association Distinguished Research Award for paper titled, "Individual Family, School, and Community Predictors of High School Male Suicidal Behaviors: An Analysis of 2010 Iowa Youth Survey Data." Received EdD in Educational Leadership from Drake University, December 2012.

**Elle Victoria-Gray** (MSW 2012) In December of 2013, I ventured out into my own business, Minds Matter Consulting & Education, LLC. During this time, my business partner and I were awarded a grant to conduct a research study of the behavioral health needs of youth and adults in North Dakota for the state Legislative Council's interim Human Services committee. This project took us throughout the state interviewing public, private and government groups that included the tribal governments of North and South Dakota. It quickly became apparent that availability and access to mental health services and treatment across the state was significantly lacking. This was especially true on nearly all of the tribal lands. During the course of this study I discovered that many reservations had not had a mental health provider for years, suicidal ideation and completion were on the rise and that often the best "treatment" that was available for the Native American, including many native children, was to be jailed, "until they felt better." So, even though I was very busy and satisfied with my new venture, I could not resist the unexpected job offer that came to me late summer. I was offered a full-time social work appointment with the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Black Hills Health Care System, mental health service line. I will be stationed to serve both the Cheyenne River and Standing Rock Reservation veterans and develop programming that is culturally sensitive to the Native veterans and their families on these reservations. My family and I will be moving to South Dakota and I will begin my work there November 2014.

On May 18th **Nancy Wallace, (MSW 1980)** was honored with a prestigious Excellence in Teaching Award. Nancy was nominated by students and chosen by Graceland University’s Alumni Board as an outstanding instructor. The award carries with it a $1,000 check to be used on educational improvement and professional development. She was also presented with a beautiful commemorative golden apple. Graceland University is proud to include Nancy on the roster of excellent teachers who bring passion to their careers and enable students to find success.

“What is most impressive about Nancy is her ceaseless patience and endless compassion for her students. She is always willing to work hard, putting in many extra hours to help us learn.”

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Mercedes Bern-Klug—Nobody wants to die young yet few want to get old. One of our culture’s most feared aspects of growing older is losing independence due to cognitive or physical frailty. My research is concerned with how society can provide better care to persons living with advanced chronic illness. I’m part of a national team developing educational materials for nursing home social workers so that they can provide better care to residents and family members. My recently published model of medical decision-making reminds health care professionals that in addition to medical information, families benefit from emotional support when weighing medical and end-of-life decisions. New ideas about the potential of old age are percolating in society; my work is part of expanding society’s expectations of these possibilities for all older adults including those with disabilities.

Amy Butler—Using longitudinal data that spanned several decades, Professor Amy Butler found that women diagnosed with depression as children continued to have elevated symptoms of psychological distress in the decades that followed. Moreover, their children were more likely than other children to be born into single-parent families, to be exposed to poverty as children, and to exhibit depressive symptoms themselves. This raises the troubling issue that even when depression is diagnosed early in life, the individuals and their future children are likely to experience more adverse conditions over the course of their lives compared to other families. These findings highlight the importance of expanding the availability and outreach of accessible and affordable adult and child mental health services.

Carol Coohey—Along with my colleague, Dr. Julie Bockenstedt (director of the Humility of Mary Shelter and adjunct faculty at the UI), I am examining factors related to depression and suicidal thoughts among adults who are homeless in the Quad Cities area. Our first study showed that the number of sources of psychological pain (being very troubled by family problems, past victimization, employment problems, etc.) and past suicide attempts predicted current suicidal thoughts but being diagnosed with a depressive disorder did not. We concluded, it is important for shelter workers to ask adults whether they have attempted suicide in the past and how troubled they are by each area of their lives during the intake process and to remain alert for factors related to suicide ideation. To under-

In March, Yvonne Farley, MSW, LISW was named Social Worker of the Year for 2014 by the IA-NASW. She was presented with the award at the IA-NASW Symposium luncheon. Pictured are Yvonne and Sandra McGee, PhD, last year’s winner.

Mercedes Bern-Klug visits with NASW President Darrell P. Wheeler, PhD, MPH, ACSW at the annual conference in Washington, DC.

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stand predictors of suicidal ideation, workers need to be well-trained in suicide assessment, and know how and when to refer adults for services outside the shelter.

Yvonne Farley—During the last year, I have been doing a research project on the use of mindfulness and meditation in the classroom. The hope is that it will teach students skills which they can in turn use with clients, especially those with anxiety disorders. Additionally, it will help students to be more self-aware when they are challenged by clients. This is very applicable to use with veterans and the challenges they and their families face after deployment, a population I work with every summer. This summer I worked with the children of soldiers, providing them with support and coping skills for the challenges they face as a result of their parent’s job.

Lily French—The cultural assumption that if you work hard enough you will be able to support yourself and your family is increasingly more myth than reality. With one in 6 working Iowa households and nearly three out of 5 employed single parent households struggling to make ends meet, we must look more closely at the intersection of available wages and basic living expenses to understand current struggles for economic security. The 2014 Cost of Living in Iowa report series, co-authored with Peter Fisher of the Iowa Policy Project, illustrates how much Iowa families must earn in order to meet their basic needs and underscores the importance of public work support programs for many who, despite their work efforts, are not able to pay for the most basic living expenses.

Megan Gilster—While some neighborhoods support the physical and mental health of residents, many do not. In analysis of a survey of Chicago residents, I found that neighborhoods with more stressors (e.g., vandalism, noise, lack of services) were associated with more depressive symptoms among residents. Furthermore, results suggested that mastery—or one’s sense of control over their life—protected against depressive symptoms for whites and those in the lowest stress neighborhoods. Findings from this research underscore the importance of addressing neighborhood stressors. Improving neighborhoods may improve resident mental and physical health through multiple pathways.

May Guo—Latinos and Asians are the fastest growing ethnic minority groups in the United States, but studies of seniors’ mental health have been largely limited to Whites and African Americans. Using a nationally representative sample, my colleagues and I found that older Latinos were almost twice as likely as older Asians to have any anxiety or mood disorders in their lifetime (34.5% vs. 17.7%) and in the past year (14.3% vs. 7.4%). In addition, in both groups, family cultural conflict was associated with a higher prevalence of anxiety disorders, whereas family cohesion was associated with a lower prevalence of mood disorders. Although most previous studies have emphasized the psychological benefits of cohesive family ties in the two groups, our findings show that more research is needed to understand the causes and psychological implications of family cultural conflicts among older ethnic minorities.

Carolyn Hartley—Iowa law provides for restitution to be ordered and paid to victims of crime who suffer physical injury, property damage, lost wages, or other expenses related to their victimization. Many barriers exist in the ordering and collection of victim restitution including victims’ failure to request restitution, the victim or court’s inability to determine the loss experienced, perceptions of the defendant’s inability to pay, and difficulty tracking offenders to enforce payment. I am working with the Crime Victim Assistance Division (CVAD) of the Attorney’s Generals Office to conduct a needs assessment of the victim restitution process in Iowa to assist CVAD in developing an implementation project to improve this process in Iowa.

Pat Kelley—I have been retired now for 10 years. While active in academic and other university activities for the first few years, since I have retired to Florida to be near kids and grandkids I have been less active in scholarly affairs. However I have continued some activities as I have written chapters on narrative therapy in F.J. Turner’s Social Work Treatment: Interlocking Theoretical Approaches, 6th ed, published by Oxford Press, and in Social Workers’ Desk Reference 3rd ed. published by NASW and Oxford Press. The Desk Reference came out in 2013 and Turner’s book is coming out now--October of 2014. I am also a regular reviewer for two journals: The Journal of Loss and Trauma, for which I also sit on the editorial board, and Families in Society, http://clas.uiowa.edu/socialwork
which awarded me for service in November of 2013. I have also been notified by Marquis Who's Who in America that I have been listed in their publication for 25 consecutive years.

**Julia Kleinschmit**- With our Sioux City MSW students, I am working with the University of Iowa’s Initiative for Sustainable Communities on a number of fronts: 1) Increasing involvement of social services agencies in region-wide transportation planning; 2) Increasing access to transportation in Siouxland for people with disabilities; and 3) Enhancing cultural relevance of Sioux City’s Blue Zone Initiative to better include Spanish speaking people and people with serious and persistent mental illnesses. My other major thrusts include evaluating better ways area Tribes and the States of Iowa and Nebraska can recruit, support, and retain Native American foster parents, and even pushing the envelope on distance education so that we can provide excellent social work education “coast to coast” in Iowa, and beyond.

**Miriam Landsman**- The absence of safe, affordable housing is a significant factor that leaves homeless, child welfare involved families vulnerable to having children removed from their care and delaying reunification when children are in out-of-home care. In collaboration with Four Oaks, the Iowa Department of Human Services, and the Affordable Housing Network in Cedar Rapids, I am evaluating a five-year experiment in providing supportive housing to 125 child welfare involved families in Linn County, Iowa. This is one of five demonstration projects in the nation funded by the U.S. Children’s Bureau.

**Billie Marchik**- As the social work profession in Iowa faces an aging workforce, comparatively low salaries, and challenging work environments, there are important questions about the replacement, retention and stability of its workforce. To better understand these issues, I have been involved in a study of the social work labor force, conducted in collaboration with and on behalf of the Iowa chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. The study is focused on a number of related factors: salaries, licensure, educational preparation for practice, educational debt, work-family conflict, caretaking responsibilities, workforce plans, and organizational and professional commitment.

**Alison Oliver**- I am currently serving on the Institute Planning Committee for the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT). We are developing a Winter Institute to be held in January 2015 in St. Louis, Missouri, on trauma-informed sex therapy, counseling, and education. While trauma-informed care is not a new concept to practitioners, its application to sex therapy and sexuality education is still developing. Clinicians, counselors, and educators have identified a gap in their knowledge and skills in applying a trauma-informed lens to work in sexuality. Current clinical and educational approaches tend to focus on risks and vulnerabilities while ignoring positive sex development and resilience in sexual expression and growth. The AASECT Winter Institute seeks to offer cutting edge researchers and practitioners to bridge the gap between trauma-informed care and sexuality education, counseling, and therapy.

**Sara Sanders**- I am currently working with the Iowa Medical Classification Center to implement advance care planning for offenders who have chronic health conditions and are expected to die within the next year. This research has demonstrated the challenges associated with honoring the end of life wishes of individuals who reside in correctional settings since systemic change takes time, prison policy and protocols are often counter to the desires of the offenders, potential family decision makers are not involved, and extensive unaddressed psychosocial arise as death approaches. As the barriers associated with implementing advance care planning for dying offenders are addressed, it is hoped that a uniform system for identifying the wishes of dying offenders can be implemented throughout the state.

**Ed Saunders**- In cooperation with Advocates for Youth, a national advocacy organization in Washington DC, I am investigating the development and sustainability of community-wide pregnancy prevention initiatives in nine communities in the U.S (funded by the CDC). The focus of my research has been the development and implementation of three community teams responsible for “mobilizing” their communities in support of evidence-based sexuality programs for youth and improved access to youth-responsive contraceptive health services. This research has direct implications for Iowa communities invested in teen pregnancy prevention as it identifies successful strategies that can be used here.

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