UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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# Spring 2003

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# Connections

### NOBEL LAUREATE JOINS GSSW FACULTY

Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Laureate, will be joining the faculty of the GSSW as a Distinguished Visiting Scholar in Fall 2003. Williams will teach "Global Justice: Patterns, Perspectives and Strategies" during the fall semester. The course will focus on the study of power and oppression. According to the Nobel Laureate, "It's never too late to make a difference."

As the driving force behind the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Williams became an activist in her early 30s. Since then, she has strived to make the world a much safer place. Through her recent lecture at the UH Graduate School of Social Work's Second **Annual Jenkins** Distinguished Lecture, Williams speech, "Individual Impact on Social and Political Change." addressed the importance of active citizenry.

"I'm not just talking about getting out there and voting," Williams said. "I'm talking about the ability of an individual to bring about change, for citizens to be actively involved in shaping the world."

Williams concern for the damage caused by landmines either left behind after wars or used as a tactic to intimidate civilians began in the late 1980s. In 1991, she began her efforts to coordinate an international effort to ban the production of landmines globally.

By 1997, the Mine Ban Treaty was circulated globally and signed by 146 countries; 130 have ratified the treaty which calls for stopping the production of landmines, removing them from the ground and assisting landmine casualties with

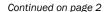




Photo By Thomas Shea

An Agent of Change
Jenkins Distinguished Lecturer
Jody Williams

### **Social Workers Receive Awards**

The Third Annual Social Work Awards Breakfast was held in conjunction with the Inaugural Gerson David Lecture on March 14. The breakfast is co-sponsored annually by the ABSW (Houston Unit), Lamar University (BSW Program), NASW (Houston and Gulf Coast Units), Prairie View A&M University (BSW Program), University of Houston-Clear Lake (BSW Program), University of Houston GSSW and the GSSW Alumni Association. Awards were given this year to 12 outstanding social workers and community leaders.

The Association of Black Social Workers honored Merrie Barr Evans and Marilyn Barr Pickens as Social Workers of the Year. The Graduate School of Social Work Alumni Association honored Paola Roldan with the Charlotte Campbell Scholarship; Maconda B. O'Connor, the Dean's Award for Excellence; Margie Jenkins, the Distinguished Alumni Award; and Barbara Mackey, the Distinguished Service Award. The National Association of Social Workers Gulf Coast Unit awarded Nancy Phillips the Lifetime Achievement in Social Work Award; Ted Hanley was selected Public Citizen of the Year; and Linda Coleman was honored as Social Worker of the Year. The National

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## A MESSAGE FROM DEAN COLBY



**Dean Colby** 

What a marvelous and fast-paced year for the GSSW. We began the year with our largest enrollment in years following a significant increase in applications

to the GSSW. The percentage of out-of-state students reached 11 percent, a significant increase over the average 2 percent since 1990. And for the first time since the early 1990s, the majority of students are full-time.

And next year, a Nobel Laureate, the 1997 Peace Prize recipient, will join the GSSW faculty and co-teach a course on global justice. Quick question: Can you name the last Nobel Peace Prize winner to hold a faculty appointment in a school of social work-Jane Addams!

So, we ask why?? Why is the GSSW experience unique in particular when compared to most schools around the country?

Let me identify some of the key

pieces that have come together over the years that provide the GSSW a solid foundation on which to build. First, the GSSW faculty is stellar. And, as noted elsewhere in Connections, a number of new incredibly gifted individuals have recently joined the faculty. During the school's spring 2003 site visit for CSWE accreditation, the "team members" specifically noted the faculty members' individual collective passion, expertise, and commitment as a significant strength of the school.

Certainly the school's curriculum is a major drawing point for individuals and helps carve out the GSSW's growing national reputation. The gerontology concentration is recognized as one of the top five among all schools while the political social work concentration is recognized as the national model. Children and families, health care and mental health are also considered among the leading specializations in the nation.

Unquestionably, the school's ability to support students with scholarships and other forms of financial assistance is important. This year, more than 200 students received financial assistance from schoolbased scholarships or national scholarships; the child welfare stipend program and the gerontology fellowship program added another 80 fellowships to our students.

Many in the region and nation recognize GSSW alumni for their ongoing levels of excellence and abilities to create positive change. From legislative offices in Washington, D.C. to entry-level child protective service worker positions on the Texas border, GSSW alumni build on the profession's rich history to strengthen communities for all people by insuring that all people, no matter their station in life, are provided the guarantees of a just society. These good works, by so many GSSW alumni, help attract top

Continued on page 5

#### Nobel Continued from page 1

medical and psychological treatment.

In 1997, Williams was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her diligent efforts to ban and dispose of landmines. The prize was no doubt encouraging for Williams and the ICBL, and it helped further communicate the landmine cause to others around the world.

By Mike Emery

#### Awards Continued from page 1

Association of Social Workers Houston Unit honored Debra Danburg as Public Citizen of the Year, Margaret O'Donnell as Social Worker of the Year, and Tara Etter as Social Work Student of the Year.

### **CHILDREN BEFORE POLITICS**

On March 13, 150 students, faculty and community members gathered outside the GSSW to attend the Stroll-In-Rally to Defeat House Bills 194 and 916. HB 194 would prohibit gays, lesbians, and bisexuals from serving as foster parents in Texas and would call for the forced removal of children already settled in loving. stable homes if it is determined that foster parents are gay, lesbian, or bisexual. HB 916 would amend state law to require that a petition for adoption filed by more than one person, be filed by one man and one woman.

The Stroll-In featured a legislative letter writing outpost and a slate of prominent speakers from the

community including: Houston City Council Member Annise Parker, Attorney Mitchell Katine, Attorney Connie Moore, Stephen "Arch" Erich and Eva Thibaudeau-Graczyk. The event was emceed by Dean Ira Colby.

On March 17, The Stroll-In Rally letters were piled into baby strollers and were delivered to each committee member at the Capitol during the Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby

The Stroll-In Rally was co-sponsored by Children Before Politics, a group from Dr. Steven Applewhite's Community Practice class and SEA Change. The effort resulted in a powerful display of social action.

By Marki McMillan

# ARUN GANDHI ADVOCATES FOR NON-VIOLENCE AT GSSW INAUGURAL GERSON DAVID LECTURE

when a person serves humanity, he

or she is serving God. He held social

On March 14, Arun Gandhi, the grandson of celebrated peace activist Mahatma Gandhi, delivered the UH Graduate School of Social Work Inaugural Gerson David Lecture during the Third Annual Greater Houston Area Social Work Awards Breakfast. According to Gandhi, the most important teaching of his grandfather was the comprehensive philosophy of nonviolence. He stated, "The key to understanding nonviolence is to realize that we have to live it to be able to practice it effectively."

Gandhi's lecture was appropriately titled "Justice Through the Eyes of My Grandfather." Gandhi began his address by recalling what his grandfather thought social work to be: "My grandfather considered social work to be the greatest religion. Grandfather believed that

work in the highest esteem and we need to continue to honor all people that dedicate their lives to serving humankind."

Mahatma Gandhi gave his grandson a list of what he called the "seven sins of the world" and told him to dedicate his life to changing them in

a list of what he called the "seven sins of the world" and told him to dedicate his life to changing them in order to create peace and harmony. The list included: "wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, and politics without principle." Gandhi shared that he recently added the eighth sin to the list, "rights without responsibilities."

Gandhi emphasized that "Unless we become the change we wish to see in the world, we can never really create that kind of peace and harmony. He went on to add that "We have to respect ourselves, respect each other and respect our connections with all of creation."

The annual Gerson David Lecture is devoted to issues relating to the ideals of peace and social justice. Arun Gandhi left a lasting impression with his audience and a charge to take his message of peace and carry it throughout the world.

Gandhi, who as a teenager lived with his grandfather in India, is currently a Scholar-in-Residence at Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee. He is the founder of the Mahatma K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, a former *Times of India* reporter, and the author of eight books.

By Lisa Street



Inaugural Gerson David Lecture
Dr. Gerson David and Arun Gandhi



"Justice Through the Eyes of My Grandfather"

Arun Gandhi



NASW Houston Unit Awardees
Tara Etter, Ellen Seaton and Debra Danburg

### **GSSW's Office of Community Projects**

The GSSW Office of Community Projects (OCP) serves as a vital link between the social service community and the Graduate School of Social Work. Under the directorship of Ann McFarland and her outstanding staff of program managers, linkages extend into the undergraduate curriculum through the American Humanics Nonprofit Certificate Program, and the Child Welfare Education Project that prepares master's level social work students for the challenging and rewarding work in children's protective services. OCP provides opportunities for GSSW faculty and the community to collaborate on needs assessments and program evaluations for social service agencies throughout the state of Texas. The Continuing Education program is designed to provide the human services community with opportunities to build practice knowledge and skills by offering courses that are responsive, dynamic and up-to-date in their content. The Funding Source assists organizations with locating funding opportunities and to aid in the development of grant-writing skills. The Protective Services Training Institute of Texas provides interactive, skill-based training to protective services caseworkers and supervisors throughout the state on a comprehensive array of topics. OCP is broad in scope yet effective in delivery. For further information, call (713)743-8145 or email amcfarland@uh.edu.

### GSSW Dean's Advisory Council

Carole Ashendorf
Baylor Geriatric
Medicine Associates
GSSW Alumna '95

Ruth Brodsky

Community Volunteer

Sylvia Brooks Houston Area Urban League

Cam Canion

Community Volunteer

Leonel Castillo
Office of the Mayor

Felix Fraga Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

> Brenda Gallagher Greater Houston Women's Foundation

Barbara Henley *UH-GSSW* 

Theopolis Holeman

Duke Energy Corporation

Marjorie Jenkins GSSW Alumna '76

Cecile Keeper

Ronald Lewis Baker Botts L.L.P.

Barbara Mackey GSSW Alumna '92

Linda May Simmons Foundation

Rafael Medrano Housing Opportunities of Houston, Inc. GSSW Alumna '80

Wayne Norden Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas

Cindy Reibenstein Methodist Hospital GSSW Alumna '88

Lawrence Root, MD

Monsignor Frank Rossi Diocese of Galveston-Houston

> Victor Samuels Victory Packaging

Donald Sheppard Houston Endowment, Inc.

Ed Smith
Foley's Department Store

Mary Jean Weston

Jewish Family Services

Jerri Workman *Heights Education Project Alumna '89* 

Ira C. Colby, Dean

### **FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS**

Andy Achenbaum joined the GSSW faculty in Fall 2002 as Professor of History and Social Work. He is the former dean of the UH College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. He is the past chair of the board of the National Council on the Aging and is currently serving as secretary of the Gerontological Society of America.

Brené Brown joined the GSSW faculty as an assistant professor in Fall 2002. She holds a BSW from UT-Austin and MSW and Ph.D. degrees from the GSSW. Dr. Brown has taught at the undergraduate and graduate levels for the past five years. Her teaching areas include political social work, research and women's issues. This summer, she will teach the GSSW's first fully on-line course (Women's Issues) and during the Fall 2003 semester she will co-teach a course on global social iustice issues with Jody Williams, Distinguished Visiting Scholar to UH. She is the author of the forthcoming book, "Fractured: What Shame Does to Women and the Path from Pain to Power."

Li-Mei Chen joined the faculty as an assistant professor in Fall 2002. She has just been selected by the John A. Hartford Foundation as a Fellow through the Geriatric Social Work Initiative Faculty Scholars Program. Dr. Chen has delivered numerous presentations throughout the year at

conferences including the 49th Annual Program Meeting of CSWE, the Society for Social Work Research, and the 55th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. She recently had an article accepted in the Journal of International Psychogeriatrics.

Howard Karger was just awarded a contract with Columbia University Press for his book, Scamming the Poor: On Being Trapped in America's Fringe Economy. The book examines pawnshops, payday loan and check cashing outlets, tax refund loans, secured credit card vendors, home buying, remodeling, and refinancing schemes; the rent-to-own industry, used car lots, sub-prime and nonprime lenders, fringe auto insurers, and fringe market telecommunications companies. The book does not simply list economic scams; it provides a lens for understanding the economic lives of the poor.

Ellen Stevens-Roseman published an article entitled "Gerontology as a **Graduate Social Work** Concentration: Origins, Outcomes, Sustainment" in the Journal of Gerontological Social Work recently. She delivered a presentation, "Putting Wisdom to Work: **Educating for Employment** of Elders" at the 29th Annual Meeting of the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education in St. Petersburg, Florida in March 2003.

Barbara Henley, LMSW-ACP, received the Susan L. Browder Award from the Texas Chapter of the Society for Social Leadership in Health Care. This award is given to an individual who has been an outstanding mentor to health care social workers and who has been a lifetime leader for the social work profession in Texas. She spoke at the Harris County Hospital District Social Work Department Luncheon in March on "The Power of Social Work: Preserving Rights and Strengthening Voices."

Monit Cheung was honored by the YWCA of Houston as the 2002 Woman of Achievement in the Education category. Dr. Cheung reported on the National Matrix on Title IV-E Stipends/ Paybacks at the Child Welfare Symposium at CSWE's annual meeting in February. This national survey has been highly praised by the national IV-E partners.

Maxine Weinman Epstein has been promoted to full professor. Congratulations to Dr. Epstein on this significant professional accomplishment!

Gerson David has been awarded the 2003 Edith Abbott Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Chicago School of Social Administration.

### **ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS**

### Greetings From the GSSW Alumni Association President

I have enjoyed serving on the GSSW Alumni Board since I graduated in 1999. During the past four years, I have seen some exciting changes within the Graduate School of Social Work and I am proud of the work our board has done to grow in partnership. In the Fall, our annual meeting was a great success. In addition to expanding our board membership, we presented a panel discussion on alternative careers in social work, facilitated by Dr. Jean Latting. With more than 50 people attending, it was a dynamic sharing of ideas, a chance to network with old and new social work friends, and an opportunity to earn CEUs. Watch for the details of our next annual meeting to be announced soon.

More recently, the alumni association completed its third annual garage sale. We enjoyed a beautiful sunny day and once again proved the saying, "One person's trash is another person's treasure." The money raised will go toward the Charlotte Campbell Scholarship which is our great pleasure to award every Spring. Thank you to everyone who donated their time, their items and to those who purchased treasures.

Finally, let me restate our commitment to serving the GSSW and its graduates. We are working to improve communications and expand services and events. In our diverse profession, the alumni association provides a common thread. Every graduate is a vital part of the thread, keeping us connected to other professionals, our communities, the GSSW faculty, and the University of Houston. Thank you to all alumni association members for your support and participation. Thank you to all the alumni board members who give of their time and talent and make our connections so much fun.

Kristin Curran, President gsswalum@sw.uh.edu



GSSW Alumni Award Winners

(L-R) Barbara Mackey, Maconda Brown O'Connor, Kristin Curran (Alumni President), and Marjorie Jenkins



**GSSW Alumni Board Members** 

Front row (L-R): Kristin Curran (president), Ann McFarland, Annemarie Redelmeier, Sara Lewis; second row: Will Dickey, Kenneth Beason (treasurer), Stephanie Foy (past president), Amy Blakeney (secretary), Agnes Dulin, Jennifer Battle and Barbara McGinity.

### **Dean's Message**Continued from page 2

applicants to the school.

The GSSW is an exciting, vibrant school! Our most recent accreditation site visit attested to the GSSW's excellence. We can certainly now sit back and rest on our laurels, but we will not. We will continue to develop new curricula, strengthen our points of excellence, and work to provide a cutting edge, proactive educational experience for students. The GSSW's tradition of making a difference will continue.

Congratulations 2003 Graduates From Faculty, Staff and Alumni of the GSSW!

# RESEARCH ANNOUNCEMENT

### GSSW C & F Graduates

One of our doctoral students is conducting a research project and is in need of volunteers to complete a survey. All surveys will remain confidential.

If you graduated from the GSSW in the last four years with a concentration in Children and Families and would like to participate please contact:

Trish Taylor (713)743-8081 ptaylor2@mail.uh.edu

### Career Development Services are available to GSSW students & alumni!

Are you an alum considering a job change? A recent graduate looking for work? An employer wanting to post a job for qualified social workers? Take advantage of these services:

- GSSW Job Posting Website
- Career Consultations
- Resume Development
- Job Search Strategies
- Interview Techniques

Contact: Ann Liberman, MSW
Director Alumni & Career Services
(713)743-8071

mswjobs@sw.uh.edu



### The Nonprofit Executive Certificate Program

is designed to equip experienced nonprofit executives, senior managers and interested board members with enhanced leadership and decisionmaking skills that promote innovation and strengthen the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing environment. More than an overview of fundamental management principles, the Nonprofit Executive Certificate Program will enrich and expand the capabilities of forward-thinking executives and provide the skills necessary to lead organizations in the 21st Century.

Each content module incorporates concepts of:

- Strategic Thinking
- Values & Ethics
- Change Management
- Leveraging Resources
- Evaluation & Practice

The Nonprofit Executive Certificate Program is a collaborative venture between The United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast (MAP), Cultural Arts Council of Houston (MODE) and the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work (AH and OCP).

For information, contact: GSSW/ OCP (713)743-8143 ablakeney@uh,edu www.sw.uh.edu/ocp

### **ALUMNI NOTES**

### Amber Mollhagen ('99)

and husband Jeff are the proud parents of Lydia Ann Mollhagen born on February 11, 2003. Amber is the Director of Recruitment/Admissions for the GSSW and serves as chair of the Scholarships and Awards Committee for the GSSW Alumni Association.

#### Jolyn Mikow, Ph.D. ('02)

has been invited to present her dissertation research entitled: "The Impact of Family, Ethnicity and Acculturation on Substance Use Among Mexican – American Adolescent Females: A Comparison of High Risk and Low Risk Groups" at the 15th National Symposium on Doctoral Research in Social Work in late April.

Jennifer Battle ('98) has recently joined MHMRA at the Neuro Psychiatric Center to create a new program called the MHMRA Help Line. She serves as chair of the Membership Committee for the GSSW Alumni Association.

Anthony (Tony) Fernandez ('96) is working at Select Specialty Hospital as Director of Case Management.

Jennifer Katial ('01) has recently gone to work as the Trafficking Program Coordinator at the YMCA International. She found the position through a job posting on the GSSW Alumni & Career Services Website!

Jennifer Cooper ('02) is the Program Administrator for Brazoria County Youth Home.

Cheryl Houlette ('00) is working at the VA Medical Center Houston in the Mental Health Care Line for Psychiatry.

Laura Saunders ('82) is working as a Basic Skills Development Supervisor/ Trainer at Harris County Children's Protective Services.

Debra Turkat ('02) is the office manager for the new Baylor College of Medicine-The Methodist Hospital Multiple Sclerosis Center.

Agnes Dulin ('02) is employed with Lutheran Social Services and serves as a director on the GSSW Alumni Association Board.

Annemarie Redelmeier ('02) is working with MD Anderson Cancer Center with thoracic patients. She serves as chair of the Student Support Services Committee for the GSSW

Kelly Clark ('02) has recently accepted a position with DePelchin. She will be involved with a pregnancy prevention program with middle school aged children.

Alumni Association.

Larry Hebert ('01) has accepted a position with the VA Medical Center in Dallas. He will be working with the Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program in Arlington.

Eva Thibaudeau-Graczyk ('00) was honored as the 2003 Young Alumni Award recipient. The annual awards reception was held on April 24.

Cindy Gibson ('95) is a director at Planned Parenthood where she created and developed the Client Advocacy Project which is now being implemented across the country. She conducts legislative monitoring and lobbying.

Suzanne Hagen ('02) is working as a geriatric social worker at the Vosswood Nursing Center.

Mary Ellen Galus ('01) is working as a clinical social worker at MHMRA in the Neuro Psychiatric Center.

Maria Lozano Vasquez ('02) is working as a social worker at the Baylor Teen Clinic.

Marcie Atkins ('02) has relocated to Longview, WA where she is working as a social worker at St. John's Medical Center.

Lois Nelson Robinson ('71) is retired from the VA Medical Center after 15 years. As Lois reflects on her class of 19 students, she remembers that they all went to every class together and knew where each stood on issues. Lois is proud of her daughter, Nancy Tucker, who is the president of Can Care, a nonprofit for those battling cancer.

### **GSSW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP**

The University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work Alumni Association wants you! Our mission is to support and strengthen the relationship between the alumni and the GSSW in order to promote the academic excellence of the social work profession and to support the alumni of the GSSW. By joining the GSSW Alumni Association, you receive all the benefits of the University of Houston Alumni Organization including access to the UH library, parking discounts, tickets to UH events, eligibility to join the new state-of-the-art fitness center on campus and access to career services. As a member of the GSSW Alumni Association you receive regular updates about the school, as well as invitations to school sponsored events and the *Connections* newsletter. A portion of the annual dues goes to the GSSW Alumni Association which supports scholarships to current GSSW students as well as assistance to the GSSW Student Association for projects such as commencement and new student orientation.

For more information, contact membership chair, Jennifer Battle, at (713)970-4636 or jennifer.battle@mhmraharris.org.

### **ALUMNI STORM THE STATE CAPITOL**

GSSW alumni teamed up as *Cougar Advocates for Texas* and headed for Austin on February 18 to promote "Excellence Funding for Texas: One Goal, One Fund." The CATS program, launched in 1998, is an effort of the Houston Alumni

Organization and the UH Office of Government Relations to encourage, support and coordinate alumni activities on behalf of higher education in the state of Texas. Cougar Advocates for Texas seeks, through activities and projects, to bring the full force of alumni opinion to bear upon the process of state government toward higher education.

CATS advocated to their representatives and/or senators on behalf of the University of Houston and higher education in Texas. Information about important issues affecting UH was given out to more than 300 advocates before the legislative session, and those advocates called, wrote, visited, or emailed their legislators about those issues. Barbara McGinity, Michael Rogers, Stephanie Foy, Will Dickey and Amy Blakeney attended the February 18 event on behalf of the GSSW Alumni Association.



**Cougar Advocates for Texas** 

UPDATE FORM: Bring us up-to-date!		
Name	Year Graduated:	Please provide any information that we may include in future editions of <i>Connections</i> :
Address		_
Phone	E-mail	
announceme	o receive periodic e-mail updates and ents from the GSSW. Please add my ess to the Alumni Distribution List.	
☐ I would like to join the GSSW Alumni Association. Please send me information on how to join.		Please clip and send information to University of Houston, GSSW, 237 Social Work Building, Houston, TX 77204-4013 or email information to gsswalum@sw.uh.edu



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STAY CONNECTED!

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

### SAVE THAT DATE!

### GSSW ANNUAL ALUMNI MEETING

August 28, 2003 Dr. George Magner Featured Speaker

Connections is a semiannual publication of the GSSW Office of Alumni and Career Services. Its purpose is to link the GSSW with alumni and the social work community.

# Learning, Leading.





**ВЕТИВИ SERVICE REQUESTED** 

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