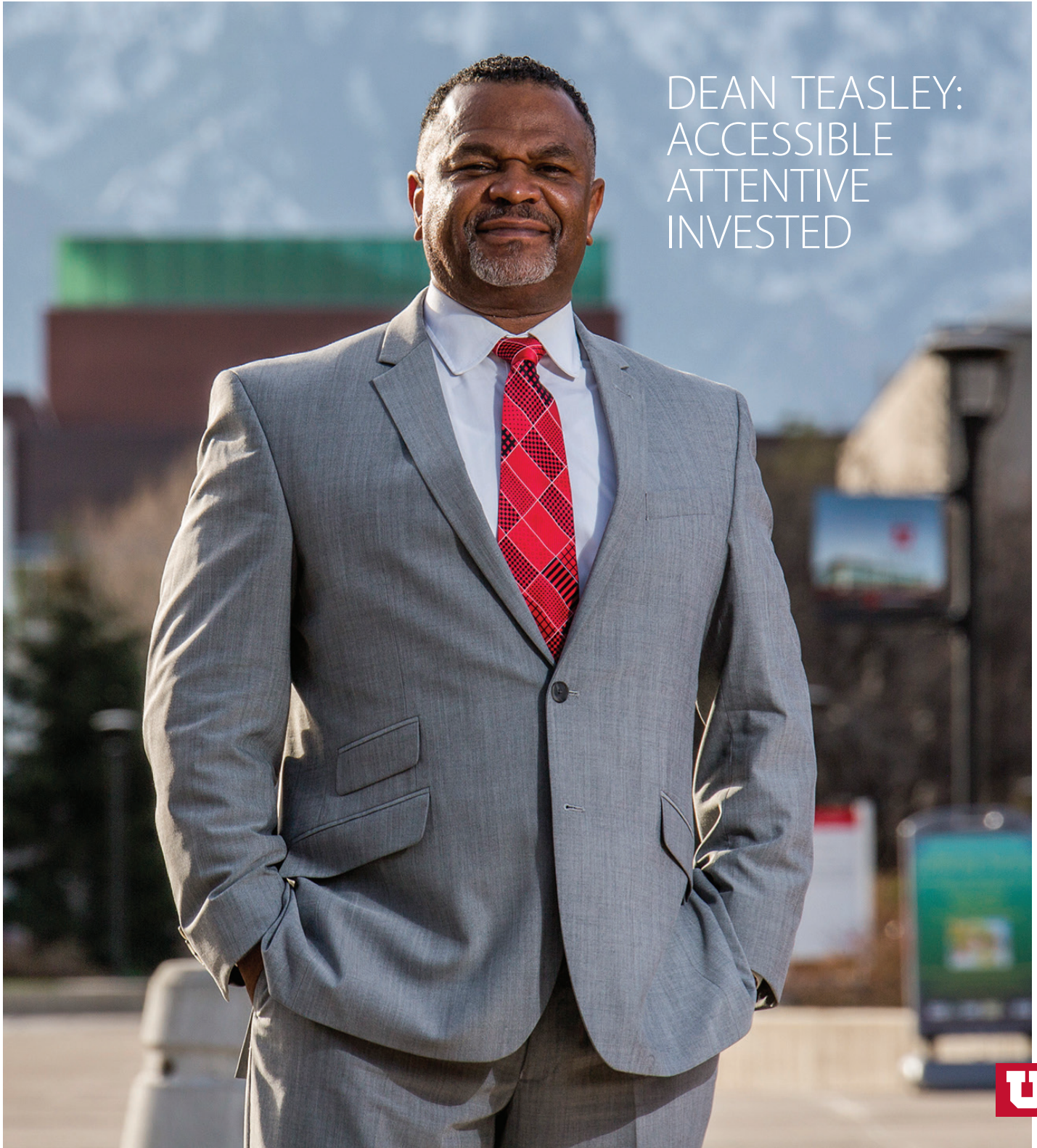


SOCIAL WORK
matters

2017 – 2018

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THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK



DEAN TEASLEY:
ACCESSIBLE
ATTENTIVE
INVESTED





2017 – 2018

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SOCIAL WORK matters

*The University of Utah
College of Social Work
2017-2018*

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

I arrived in Salt Lake City on July 4. So it is not surprising that the friendly people I meet on campus and in the community are still asking me how I like it here. Honestly, I feel like I died and went to academic heaven ... I am still pinching myself. (Also, your dry heat is very, very hot.)

There are so many exciting things happening at the University of Utah College of Social Work. Grant awards for research are among the highest in the country for schools of social work. The community engagement of our students and faculty is inspiring. I have talked to students who are invested in their programs and enthusiastic about their futures in the profession of social work. There is much to celebrate.

There is also much to do. My predecessors have built a promising program that we want to take to new levels locally and nationally. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has identified 12 Grand Challenges for academia to address in coming years. These “represent a dynamic social agenda, focused on improving individual and family well-being, strengthening the social fabric, and helping create a more just society.” In short, the Grand Challenges are about evidence-based research that can reduce or ameliorate social welfare problems. They are ambitious, even lofty. But I see them as an opportunity for the social work profession to

demonstrate its worth as an applied practice profession. The work our students and alumni do reflects the power of social work and the value of this program. Consequently, we should be ambitious, even lofty, about what we can accomplish!

I plan to spend a lot of time meeting people this first year—I call it my listening tour. I want to speak with our students and campus collaborators; I look forward to being in the community among our supporters and constructive critics; I am eager to visit with alumni to learn of your past experiences and hear your ideas about the future of social work and this dynamic program.

My friends, it will be a busy year. I hope you will be part of it—I invite you to take an opportunity to join us for a presentation, to attend a town hall, to read our students’ blog posts, or to follow us on social media. We’ll be moving fast and we want you to stay with us.

*Martell Teasley, PhD
Dean and Professor
President, National Association of Deans
and Directors of Schools of Social Work*



According to a 2015 study by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, 46.8 percent of firefighters experience suicidal ideation (compared to 5.6-14.3 percent of the general population). Firefighters were also at a higher risk for suicidal plans and attempts, as well as non-suicidal self-injury.

The Firefighter's Mind Shield

Firefighters are more likely to die by suicide than to die on the job," said Rich Landward, an assistant professor/lecturer in the College of Social Work. "We heavily invest in protective equipment to keep them physically safe—special masks, boots, jackets, pants. So why don't we spend any money to protect their minds?"

More than three years ago, Prof. Landward, Research Professor Caren Frost, and Assistant Professor Lisa Gren (Family and Preventive Medicine) began developing an intervention for first responders: Mind Shield. Rooted in mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, the intervention utilizes validated tools to assess suicidal ideation, depression, anxiety, substance misuse, and strained relationships with partners.

In September 2016, with the support of Salt Lake City Fire Department Division Chief Mike Fox, Drs. Frost and Gren began

collecting pretest surveys from all 345 Salt Lake City firefighters. In working with the firefighters, the research team learned that confidentiality of their responses and past experience with stigmatizing language used to talk about mental health issues were issues of concern. After assuring the firefighters that data would only be presented in aggregate, and developing special terminology, the team was ready to move forward.

In January, Prof. Landward began offering the three-part Mind Shield intervention to SLC firefighters. The first part is a 90-minute educational session about "brain burn" (the term used to describe PTSD) to build awareness of the condition.

Part two dives into five Mind Shield tools to calm (or protect) the mind, which focus on awareness of functioning with our primitive brains (reacting with anger and fear) versus our executive brains (processing and problem solving).

The final part of Mind Shield addresses the strained personal relationships many firefighters experience, and provides tools for communicating with their spouses/partners. The partners are also provided with their own training about trauma-informed relationships.

So far, about half of SLC Fire's firefighters have received the intervention. "I've loved working with firefighters," said Prof. Landward. "They want to get well quickly and so they work really hard at it. This has been my favorite research project ever."

Drs. Frost and Gren conducted focus groups with the firefighters who have gone through Mind Shield and are collecting post-intervention data. The team plans to publish their findings from the pilot program and hopes that, with some additional grant support, they will be able to develop an effective model for working with first responders across the state.

THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OF AGING WHILE LGBT

For the last seven years, assistant professor Charles Hoy-Ellis has been working with an interdisciplinary team of social work, sociology, public health, psychiatry, and statistics researchers from across the country on a special project—Aging with Pride: The National Health, Aging, and Sexuality/Gender Study (NHAS). The project began in 2010 as the first federally funded national study examining the life experiences of LGBT adults age 50 and older. Originally a cross-sectional study, it was re-funded by the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute on Aging, as a longitudinal study. How long could it continue? "Hopefully for the rest of our natural lives," said Dr. Hoy-Ellis.

"There was a common myth that LGBT older adults would not self-identify as LGBT," Dr. Hoy-Ellis explained. "This research shows they are willing to." While the research team acknowledges that LGBT older adults face many challenges and issues, the research is also revealing that these individuals are remarkably resilient.

Although LGBT older adults are a relatively invisible population, the team sees them as emerging from the shadows. "We are everywhere," said Dr. Hoy-Ellis.



COURTROOM SOCIAL WORK

Abdullahi "Abdi" Mohamed was 17 when he assaulted a man during a drug dispute in downtown Salt Lake City and was subsequently shot by police.

When Assistant Professor Rob Butters took the stand this spring, offering expert testimony about why justice was best served by keeping Mr. Mohamed's case in juvenile court, his comments were bolstered by the work of his students.

This is the third time Dr. Butters has enlisted the help of second-year MSW students in his advanced forensics class to come up with a recommendation in a case involving a juvenile facing certification as an adult, or prosecution under the serious youth offender law. Dr. Butters had one directive for the students: Go into the case with an open mind and make a recommendation based on what is right—for the juvenile, for the community, for everyone else.

The students, all of whom signed confidentiality agreements, were able to review critical case information and Mr. Mohamed's background and history, getting an exceptional perspective on the criminal justice system as they did their research. In this case, they also met with Mr. Mohamed and key members of his legal team.

Given what they learned, the students came to a consensus about how the case should be handled: Mr. Mohamed belonged in the juvenile rather than the adult court system—which Dr. Butters proceeded to tell 3rd District Court Juvenile Judge Julie Lund. Days later, that's exactly how Judge Lund ruled.

Dr. Butters said the case brought home many of the social justice issues currently in the news: racial bias, homelessness, refugees, police shootings. "It made for a super-rich class discussion," he said.

MSW student April O'Neill worked on the project and was in court when Dr. Butters testified. "It felt like a really humbling but important experience to be able to participate in an assignment that actually affected someone's life," O'Neill said. "It made me really appreciate my education in social work even more and showed me how social work can integrate with the court system to bring the criminal justice side and therapeutic perspective together."



After meeting with the MSW advanced forensics class, Abdi Mohamed and Rob Butters picked up some new headgear.

New Center on Mindfulness and Integrative Health Intervention Development



Susan Bauer-Wu, president of the Mind & Life Institute, presented the keynote at C-MIIND's first research symposium.

This summer, the University of Utah launched a new center dedicated to providing a transformative influence on health care by unifying research on mindfulness and other integrative behavioral health interventions.

Eric Garland, associate dean for research at the College of Social Work, was named director of the new Center on Mindfulness and Integrative Health Intervention Development (C-MIIND). The Center, which assumed oversight of more than \$23 million in federal research grants, is housed in the College of Social Work, where it utilizes the College's state-of-the-art Milton and Farol Thackeray Clinical Training Suite, as well as a sophisticated psychophysiology lab for cutting-edge social work neuroscience.

C-MIIND brings together researchers and clinicians from across main campus and University of Utah Health—including faculty in social work, psychiatry, primary care, anesthesiology, neuroscience, psychology, and health—who are pioneering integrative interventions aimed at improving physical and mental well-being.

"The Center will advance a vision of a new model of health care, in which behavioral health experts work in tandem with medical providers to address the physical, psychological, and social needs of people suffering from an array of health conditions," said Dr. Garland, whose research focuses on using mindfulness

to help individuals who experience chronic pain.

As it grows, C-MIIND will strive to attract top faculty and provide research opportunities for undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral fellows interested in studying mindfulness and integrative behavioral health. The Center will also train post-graduates and health care providers in innovative therapies to be used in primary care clinics, hospitals, community mental health centers, and addiction treatment facilities.

In July, C-MIIND hosted its first research symposium, which focused on translating basic biobehavioral science into integrative health. Susan Bauer-Wu, president of the Mind & Life Institute—the world's premier multidisciplinary organization for the scientific study of mindfulness and meditation—presented the keynote. Jon-Kar Zubieta, professor and chair of the University of Utah Department of Psychiatry and psychiatrist-in-chief of the University Neuropsychiatric Institute, and Dr. Garland also shared their groundbreaking research on mindfulness, pain, opioids, and the brain. Video of the symposium is available on the College of Social Work's YouTube channel.



Scan for video of the C-MIIND research symposium.

SMALL GRANTS & OBJECTS OF RESILIENCE



The Objects of Resilience exhibit kicked off on April 14 with a reception and short presentation of stories and images.

A gold and purple ring. A bottle of bright red fish sauce. A stuffed toy wearing a small mortarboard with a frayed tassel. Photos of the seemingly unrelated objects were part of the 25-piece Objects of Resilience photo exhibit, which was on display in April of 2017 and was organized by the student experiential scholars working with the College of Social Work's Initiative for Transformative Social Work (ITSW).

"It tells a story of migration through the objects in one's life," explained Assistant Professor Annie Isabel Fukushima, who oversaw the project as the 2016-2017 director of ITSW. "ITSW students originally hoped that it would tell a story regarding the refugee experiences. However, in reaching out to the community for stories surrounding displacement and migration, the submissions oriented us toward a broader story of migration."

In addition to supporting the projects of its four experiential scholars, this year ITSW launched a Social Justice Small Grants Program to assist other social work students, faculty, and staff with the development of their passion projects.

Two Social Justice Small Grants were awarded during spring semester. MSW student Haley Burton was awarded \$300 on behalf of the Actively Moving Forward (AMF) Chapter at the University of Utah, which works toward providing peer support to students experiencing grief or bereavement. The grant supported nine MSW students who traveled to the Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference in Oregon to present a poster on AMF's advocacy work at the U. (See page 12 for more about this presentation.)

A second grant of \$300 was awarded to MSW student Lindsey Johnson, who worked with the Secular Student Alliance (SSA) to organize a panel discussion on Secular and Religious Individuals Navigating Relationships. The goal of the SSA is to empower students to feel proud of their identities, come together to speak freely of their experiences, and to build welcoming communities of students of diverse ideologies.

GRATEFUL ALUM ENCOURAGES DEDICATED STUDENTS

John Hardy Stewart (MSW 2006) wanted a social work degree, but was not sure how he would be accepted in the program—he was non-traditional in a variety of ways and assumed his path might be rocky. Mr. Stewart was delighted to find a niche in his cohort and to thrive in the program. A decade later, as a joyful retiree, he decided to encourage upcoming generations of social work students. This spring he initiated the John Hardy Stewart Award for MSW students who have succeeded in the program beyond the classroom. "I want to recognize the 'most improved'—and that is not always reflected in GPA," said Mr. Stewart.

Mr. Stewart attended the fateful April Awards dinner (See page 19 for details on that adventure) and came away impressed with the students he met—and surprised they were grateful for his "small" acknowledgement of their accomplishments. "They were so amazing and so appreciative of the honor. Next year, I'm excited to increase my donation!" he pledged.



Recipients Rio Schmidt and Ani Robles, pictured with Dean Hank Liese and donor John Hardy Stewart, both expressed how honored they were to receive this award, particularly from someone who shared their passion for community advocacy.

Meet the Postdocs



Rachel Atchley earned her PhD from Bowling Green State University in Ohio, where she completed her dissertation on the neuroscience of mindfulness meditation, with a specific focus on inhibitory (sensory) gating mechanisms. She is completing her postdoctoral research fellowship with the new Center on Mindfulness and Integrative Health Intervention Development (C-MIIND), under the mentorship of Eric Garland, director of C-MIIND and associate dean for research in the College of Social Work. She is currently working on a PCORI grant comparing meditation and cognitive behavioral therapy as possible treatment options for patients who use opioids for chronic low back pain. Outside of her work at the College, Dr. Atchley is enjoying Utah's great hiking and beautiful mountains.



After a three-year stint as a basketball player in Finland, **Adam Hanley** earned his PhD from Florida State University's combined counseling psychology and school psychology program, where his dissertation research explored the relationships between mindfulness and posttraumatic growth. "I had heard great things about the University of Utah from my mentor, Dr. Eric Garland—the renowned faculty, the vibrant campus, the natural beauty," said Dr. Hanley. In addition to contributing to Dr. Garland's projects, Dr. Hanley is working on a project funded by the Mind & Life Institute, exploring whether different attention training practices have the ability to alter habit formation. He is also exploring the impact of mindfulness training on the experience of self. "The U has been an amazing place to spend my first postdoctoral year," said Dr. Hanley. "The College of Social Work has been extremely welcoming and supportive, providing me with a wealth of resources that have made my time here deeply enriching."



Working under the mentorship of Utah Criminal Justice Center (UCJC) Director Rob Butters, **Allyson Walker** recently joined the College as its third postdoctoral fellow. They earned their PhD in criminal justice at John Jay College in the City University of New York system, while simultaneously working at the Center for Court Innovation. Their dissertation examined coping mechanisms and strategies for non-offending among individuals who are primarily attracted to minors, who have never committed a sexual offense against a child. "I was drawn to the UCJC because I have a background in social work (my bachelor's and master's degrees are in social work) and my research interests within criminal justice intersect with social work/social justice issues," Dr. Walker explained. Two of the research projects they will work on while at the U are studies of early case resolution and mental health courts. "As a very recent transplant from NYC, I'm so excited to be at the U and in Salt Lake City in general!"

UCJC to Evaluate Stability Services in Salt Lake County

On a freezing cold morning last December, Salt Lake County Mayor Ben McAdams announced the launch of two new Pay for Success initiatives to address two long-running challenges: persistent homelessness and adults with repeat stays in jail. The programs—operated by local nonprofits The Road Home and First Step House—are being independently evaluated by the Utah Criminal Justice Center (UCJC) at the University of Utah College of Social Work.

The Homes Not Jail (HNJ) program launched in January 2017 and provides services to improve housing stability, criminal justice, and behavioral health outcomes for 315 individuals identified as persistently homeless (meaning they have spent at least 90 days in the past year and no more than 364 days over the previous three years in emergency shelter). Program participants have improved access to a range of housing assistance and support services, including access to behavioral health treatment, employment counseling, and rental assistance.

The second program, REACH (Recovery, Engagement, Assessment, Career, and Housing), launched in July 2017 and will serve approximately 225 formerly-incarcerated adult males who are at high risk for additional criminal charges. The REACH program provides participants with behavioral health treatment (including substance use disorder treatment), housing, and case management services, with the goal of lowering the rate of recidivism, helping them recover stable lives, and reducing costs to taxpayers.

"The Utah Criminal Justice Center is pleased to provide evaluations of the REACH and Homes Not Jail programs using the most rigorous of scientific methods—a randomized controlled trial," said UCJC Director Rob Butters. "Using this research design, we will be able to measure the effectiveness of these innovative programs and report on outcomes that are truly meaningful to our community."



The UCJC research team: Director Rob Butters, Jessica Seawright, Christian Sarver, April O'Neill, Sydnee O'Donnell, Associate Director Erin Worwood, and Kort Prince.

Out of the Classroom and into the Community – Students Lead Service Projects for Older Adults

The crisp morning last fall was filled with the sounds of clippers snipping vines, rakes scratching dry leaves, and happy chatter among 35 College of Social Work Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN) volunteers who had gathered to help 16 older adults with seasonal yard work. For the second year in a row, the student-organized event served clients who needed assistance with yard work, minor painting projects, and weather proofing.

The students—along with College faculty and staff and an assortment of family members and friends—also provide the service each spring. So it was that on a perfect day in April, 52 volunteers helped support 19 older adults with planting flowers, preparing vegetable gardens, and a host of other home and yard projects. In addition to chipping in with their exceptionally skilled labor, faculty and staff also contributed dollars in support of both efforts—allowing NHN to buy garbage bags, water for volunteers, and supplies for special repair projects.



Students recruited friends and family to volunteer for Neighbors Helping Neighbors' April 2017 day of service.

W.D. Goodwill Initiatives on Aging Executive Director Troy Andersen, who oversees NHN, appreciates the community partners involved in this wonderful program. "We are particularly gratefully to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for their contributions to these projects and the many other efforts our students coordinate for our clients throughout the year." Dr. Andersen added, "Through these collaborative efforts, we are thrilled to help over 200 older adults remain safely in their homes and, frequently, out of state-funded centers."

On behalf of NHN students and clients, NHN Executive Director Regina Campbell added her own encouraging words, "Thank you to all who contributed—and welcome to any who are interested in joining us in the future!"



A Conversation with Dean Martell Teasley

“ A common goal in social work and nursing is being a humanitarian. My experiences in both fields give me the ability to look at things from different positions.”

—Martell Teasley

Q. Your path to social work was rather atypical. Will you share your story?

A. I had no ambition about going to college. I was from a blue collar family, and I planned to get a 9 to 5 job. It was the 1970s, I had just finished high school and I was working in the steel mill (in Ohio)—I have a nice scar on my left arm from a grinding wheel hitting me there. A couple years in, I started taking some classes at the University of Cincinnati.

When a series of layoffs hit five years later, I wanted to continue my education. Odd jobs covered tuition but didn't give me enough to also live on. I ended up in the United States Army because I wanted to finish college. I had no intentions of staying there the 10 years that I did—first as a medic and then as a nurse in the first Gulf War.

I was medically retired in 1991 and decided, although nursing was rewarding, I wanted to do counseling. When I described this to a Veteran's Administration advisor—he suggested social work. I thought, “Take kids out of homes?” After obtaining two degrees at Fayetteville State University, I went to Virginia Commonwealth University for my MSW, while continuing to work part-time as a nurse. Then I finished the MSW program and was encouraged by mentors to pursue a PhD; I ended up at Howard University. I think that was a good decision.

Q. How does your experience in different disciplines inform your interdisciplinary collaborations?

A. A common goal in social work and nursing is being a humanitarian. My experiences in both fields give me the ability to look at things from different positions. Both social workers and nurses are concerned about how an individual's health affects well-being and social functioning, which are social determinants of health. However, health care workers are more concerned about an individual's physical health, whereas social workers concentrate on individual social functioning and lifestyle. Today, social workers are fully integrated into the nation's health care services. I can add a lot to those collaborative conversations, because I have those different perspectives.

“It's not so much about me, but about us as a collective.”

Q. Why Utah?

A. Everything kind of fit in place. I got a call from Utah. The first thing I thought was, “Just be polite—but that's not going to happen.” Then I thought, “Don't turn down opportunities until you have fully vetted them.” First, I found out it's only 2 hours 45 minutes to fly back to San Antonio to see my daughter. It was hard to move away from her—she's a real daddy's girl. Then I began to look at the weather report and I thought—it's not that cold!

Then I quickly realized this university and school are addressing the needs of the people within the context of their community—that went a long way with me. Additionally, research and grant funding are strong, the programs are intact and addressing issues that are germane to the surrounding community and region. The College and University are in good financial health. The metrics here are better than other higher ranked schools. The only thing needed was a dynamic leader (laugh)—and I thought I could be that leader.

Q. We understand you have a spectacular art collection. Will any treasures make it to your new office?

A. I brought in two pieces. It's not expensive stuff, it comes from street vendors in South Africa. They are very talented and every time I go over there I just keep buying things, because it's really nice. And art is a way for me to relax. I can get really engulfed in a project so that it takes up my whole weekend, particularly if it's writing. However, stopping for three to five hours and dealing with the art—stretching it myself, framing it, and sometimes even touching it up a bit (the street artists don't know about that)—is cathartic for me.

Q. What would you like your legacy at the CSW to be?

A. It's not so much about me, but about us as a collective. During my time, we want to launch the College on a trajectory that sustains it for the future—its education programs, research opportunities and community based initiatives. We exist to educate students and prepare them for the future. We must have a signature pedagogical practice—one or several things we do better than other programs. Ultimately, I hope I am remembered as just being a generally nice person. When I left San Antonio, students told me they could tell I really cared about them. That really warmed my heart, because they are what it is all about.



ACTIVELY MOVING FORWARD

Losing a loved one is never easy—trying to persevere through the demands of college classes after the loss takes a profound toll on many students. Until recently, many have coped on their own. Now a group of College of Social Work students, and several others who have experienced such grief, have formed the Actively Moving Forward (AMF) association. They offer solace to each other, but have also counseled University administration on ways the campus can support students who have experienced loss. Eight members of the AMF attended a conference in Portland, Oregon, last April where they participated in poster presentations on “Awareness of bereavement policies in higher education,” and “Grief+Loss+Stigma.” AMF advisor Mark de St. Aubin championed the students’ efforts. “They represented our College exceptionally well at this international level event and their projects were a significant addition to the knowledge of the important topic of college student bereavement.”



PREVENTING EVICTIONS OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Research Assistant Professor **Kara Byrne** was awarded a Faculty Research & Creative Grant from the University of Utah’s Vice President of Research. Dr. Byrne will collaborate with Dr. Richard Medina from the Department of Geography and Dr. Ivis Garcia from the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning to map out evictions, engage in a spatial analysis of evictions, and facilitate in-depth interviews. In short, Dr. Byrne explains, “We are working to develop research that gives us information to prevent evictions for the most vulnerable populations. The work we are doing is grounded in a community-based approach to research.” This project will inform policy that supports systems to prevent eviction. Dr. Byrne is particularly excited to engage a community resident as a research assistant, an addition she believes will help her team develop innovative ways of asking questions and designing research, and also build their capacity to ask questions and develop knowledge about their community in the future.



SUPPORTING PEER RECOVERY THROUGH EVALUATION

Doctoral student **Allison O’Connor** received a three-year \$250,000 evaluation grant designed to support implementation of local peer-led services for recovery from substance misuse. Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), peer-led services (such as peer recovery coaching, peer leadership development courses, peer-led support groups, and sober recreational activities) are offered through Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness (USARA). Evaluators gather data on client outcomes and project processes in order to assist the agency in aligning services to support positive outcomes, and to develop an evidence-based approach for implementing peer-led recovery programs. Ms. O’Connor noted, “This is a particularly exciting opportunity as peer-to-peer models of recovery are commonly used, but little is currently known about effective processes to guide implementation and maximize outcomes.”



GRIEF INTERVENTION FOR ALZHEIMER’S CAREGIVERS

Caregivers of Alzheimer patients face daily challenges in meeting the needs of their loved ones. They also experience complicated grief with the passing of those loved. Hopefully some relief is on the way. The Alzheimer’s Association awarded College of Social Work doctoral graduate **Dr. Kathie Supiano** and CSW colleagues **Drs. Marilyn Luptak** and **Troy Andersen** a \$150,000 grant to adapt a complicated grief intervention for soon-to-be bereaved dementia caregivers at risk for complicated grief. The grant will support adaptation of a Pre-Loss Group Therapy (PLGT) intervention to facilitate healthy death preparedness and eventual bereavement among caregivers. Dr. Luptak, a Hartford Scholar, is cheering the research opportunity as well as the fantastic success of Dr. Supiano and Dr. Andersen, both doctoral graduates of the College and Hartford alums. “This grant builds directly on Kathie’s dissertation and is connected to Troy’s work at the Center for Alzheimer’s Care Imaging and Research. “It’s a delight and honor to continue working with both of them as colleagues,” said Dr. Luptak.

MINDFULNESS FOR MOTHERS-TO-BE COMBATTING OPIOID MISUSE

Doctoral student **Sarah Priddy** was awarded a highly competitive Francisco J. Varela Research Grant from the Mind & Life Institute—the world’s premier scientific organization for the study of mindfulness. Ms. Priddy’s project, “The impact of mindfulness-based intervention on opioid misuse during pregnancy: A mixed methods pilot RCT,” is timely, according to Associate Dean for Research Eric Garland. “The number of women prescribed opioids and the number of infants diagnosed with neonatal abstinence syndrome have been significantly increasing over the past ten years,” said Dr. Garland. Ms. Priddy added, “Pregnant women are a vulnerable population who experience significant stigma around opioid use.” She expressed gratitude for all the support—and excitement about the possible impact of her research. “Dr. Garland’s guidance and insight into integrative health intervention research has been invaluable throughout this process. I’m truly grateful to the Mind & Life Institute for supporting this research that I hope will help social workers address the unique needs of this population.” Dr. Garland noted that this is an issue that hits close to home, as 42% of pregnant women enrolled in Medicaid in Utah are prescribed opioids during pregnancy.



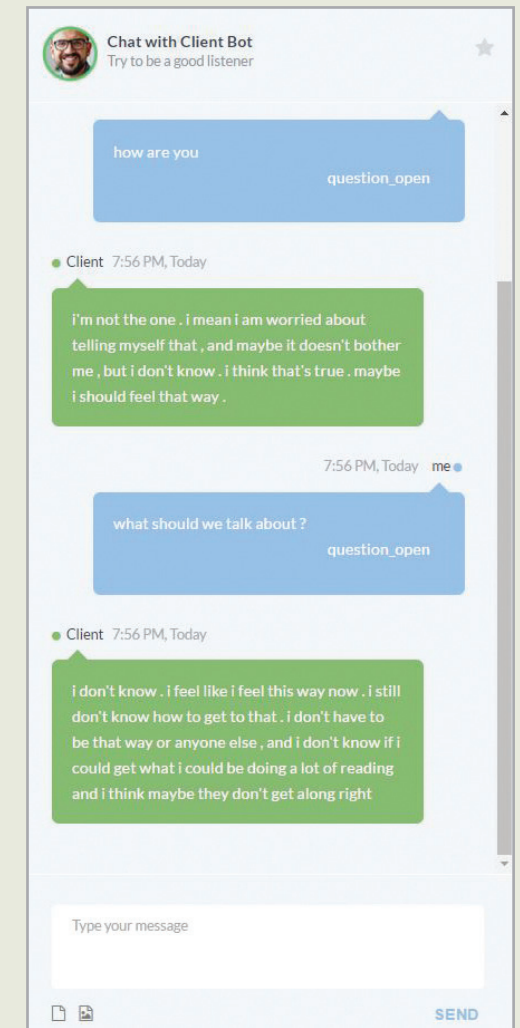
The Future of Social Work Training

About a year and a half ago, Research Assistant Professor Mike Tanana began working with Zac Imel, an associate professor in the Department of Educational Psychology, to develop a standardized virtual client to help train social workers and psychologists. That’s right, a robot client.

The client bot, as they call it, is a chat-like computer program that was fed more than 2,300 psychotherapy transcripts to teach it how to respond as a distressed client, while at the same time providing immediate feedback on therapist skills.

Last fall, the team conducted a randomized trial where 151 participants were taught Motivational Interviewing skills and then interacted with the client bot, with half also receiving automated feedback as they interacted with the bot. “Participants in the feedback condition used significantly more reflections and overall Motivational Interviewing compliant behaviors,” explained Dr. Tanana. “We were pretty excited about the results.”

Dr. Tanana is quick to note that the client bot still has a long way to go before it can be broadly utilized as a training method, but the premise seems to work, and that’s pretty amazing.



What does the client bot’s face look like? “I let my daughter pick and she liked the bearded guy,” said Mike Tanana.

Kudos!

In June of 2017, **Scott Boyle**, was awarded the Faculty/Staff Mentor of the Year award for the University of Utah Asia Campus, recognizing Dr. Boyle's outstanding student mentorship. The award was a fitting way to wrap up the BSW Program's presence in South Korea. "It was an unexpected honor and I was happy to represent the College of Social Work," said Dr. Boyle.

MSW student **Elizabeth Gamarra**, was awarded a highly-competitive Fulbright U.S. Student Program grant from the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board this spring. "I am interested in gaining a European/Spaniard perspective on the foundational concepts of social work in relation to teaching," said Ms. Gamarra, who will teach English at the IE University of Spain.

In April 2017, **Eric Garland** was appointed vice chair of the Research Working Group of the Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine and Health—a consortium of over 70 highly esteemed academic medical centers and affiliate institutions around the country. Dr. Garland was also invited to join the 2017 class of Fellows of the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR). The honor recognizes SSWR members who have served with distinction to advance the Society's mission.

Charles Hoy-Ellis was named a 2017-2018 fellow with the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program within the University of Utah College of Nursing's Utah Geriatric Center. In that capacity, he will work with an interdisciplinary team in developing education, research, and clinical expertise in long-term support services for LGBT older adults.

In April of 2017, shortly after being selected as the College of Social Work's new dean, **Martell Teasley** was elected president of the National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD). "There are some tough professional issues that I will have to tackle with my national colleagues," said Dean Teasley. "However, it is refreshing to know that my peers nationally view me as a person to take on such challenges."

Jaehee Yi was selected as the 2017-2018 Professor Off Campus by the University of Utah's Obert C. and Grace A. Tanner Humanities Center. Dr. Yi will collaborate with therapists at Community Health Centers, Inc. of Utah on her project, "Photo Storytelling as Depression Intervention for Second-Generation Immigrant Adolescent Latinas." Her project goals are to use photo storytelling to help reduce and manage depression for adolescent Latinas, to integrate photo storytelling into supportive group therapy sessions, and to enable the participants to help raise awareness about mental health.



RETIREMENTS



Helane Leta, director of MSW Field Education for the College of Social Work, retired after 25 years as a member of the College's faculty. In addition to serving as the faculty administrative liaison to hundreds of community social service programs, Prof. Leta was instrumental in the development of a number of the College's Global Social Work initiatives, and oversaw learning abroad and independent study programs, as well as international field placements.



Hank Liese retired after 24 years at the University of Utah College of Social Work, serving the last two as dean. During his tenure at the U, Dean Liese held other leadership roles as associate dean for academic affairs and director of the PhD Program, as well as special assistant to the associate vice president for faculty. Dean Liese's students and colleagues will remember him as a warm, encouraging, and supportive leader who has been truly committed to advancing the mission of the College and the University, as well as the profession of social work.

INTERACTION ON TIMELY TOPICS

When President Trump issued the executive order "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," Caren Frost, director of the Center for Research on Migration & Refugee Integration, was ready to offer her analysis... and did so on the College of Social Work's blog, *interACTION* (socialwork.utah.edu/interaction).

interACTION is a space where faculty, students, and staff offer their perspectives on current events, as seen through a social work lens. Other recent posts have explored military service by transgender people, the incorporation of the Grand Challenges for Social Work into a research class, and the power of word choice.



Scan to visit *interACTION*

NEW ROLES



Eric Garland was named director of the new Center on Mindfulness and Integrative Health Intervention Development (C-MIIND), which was launched at the end of May 2017 (see page 6). Dr. Garland also serves as the College of Social Work's associate dean for research, as well as associate director of Integrative Medicine – Supportive Oncology at the Huntsman Cancer Institute.



Christina Gringeri & Irene Ota became co-directors of the College's Initiative for Transformative Social Work, in addition to Dr. Gringeri's role as director of the PhD Program and Ms. Ota's role as diversity coordinator. "We're excited to assist the ITSW scholars who are working to ensure the College of Social Work is inclusive and active in working for social justice and change," said the duo.



Trinh Mai was appointed the new director of MSW Field Education in July 2017, having served as associate director since January 2015. "I am honored to work with a fabulous CSW team and hundreds of community partners around the state to deliver quality field education and train the next generation of social workers," said Prof. Mai.

SRI WELCOMES FIRST-EVER FACULTY FELLOW



Brad Lundahl will serve as the first faculty fellow in the College's Social Research Institute (SRI). Director Matt Davis commended Dr. Lundahl for his "vital role of content expert in Motivational Interviewing (MI) for two projects with the Department of Work Force Services (DWS)." Fellow DWS researcher Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson stated, "Brad has become an integral part of a new 'Family Focused' case management model incorporated by Utah's DWS." She believes the MI skills Dr. Lundahl introduces help DWS employees work more effectively with their clients. For his part, Dr. Lundahl is delighted to work with SRI. "This is a great team of committed social workers and professionals who are innovating methods to improve service delivery in human service groups."

Old Friends United in Support of Future Social Work Students

The two 15-year-olds stand on the grounds of their new school staring at the camera, anxious as they contemplate what awaits them at Culver Military Academy. It is their first day at the college prep school in Indiana. They have just donned their uniforms and have yet to learn how to properly stand at attention. The year was 1964, and new cadets Hank Liese and Colin Brown could not have imagined they would celebrate their 50th high school reunion at Culver in the

spring of 2017 as a retiring dean at the University of Utah College of Social Work and the Chairman and CEO of JM Family Enterprises in Deerfield Beach, Florida. The two met in 1959 as fifth graders at the American School in Manila, the Philippines, and became best friends. Together they schemed to attend Culver, following tradition in both of their families.

Shortly after their Golden Anniversary reunion at Culver, Dean Liese was humbled when Mr. Brown announced

he wanted to make a gift to the College in honor of his childhood friend and the impact Dean Liese had on his students and colleagues during his 24 years at the University. Dean Liese suggested a small scholarship, but Mr. Brown was adamant that he wanted to do something “big.” He did, creating the six-figure Colin W. Brown Endowment that will support the Hank Liese Scholarship for BSW, MSW, or PhD students at an estimated \$4,000 per year. Per Dean Liese’s request, special consideration will be given to those pursuing



Culver Military Academy welcomes 15-year-old plebes Colin Brown and Hank Liese on their first day of school.



Dean Hank Liese and Chairman and CEO Colin Brown celebrate their 50th reunion and decades-long friendship.

social work as a second career. “I was a late-blooming social worker myself,” he said, “coming to the profession after 12 years in public relations and marketing. Teaching over the years, I was continually impressed by students who were returning to the classroom after careers in other fields. I can appreciate the challenges they face as non-traditional students, the financial sacrifice they and their families make, and the courage they demonstrate in learning and exercising entirely new skills.”

“Colin’s generosity knows no bounds,” said Dean Liese, reflecting on the new scholarship in his honor. “He is a major

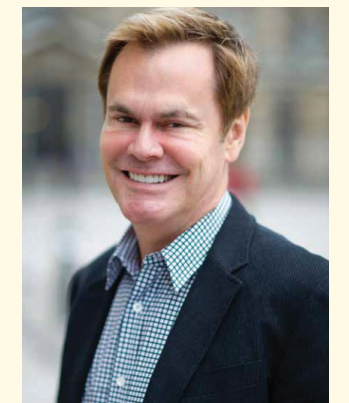
donor to Culver, and now to the College of Social Work. I am moved by his kindness and hope he will be able to join me at our fall scholarship dinners in the coming years.”

Said Mr. Brown, “I am thrilled to be able to recognize and acknowledge Hank’s and my friendship through this endowment. Hank is my oldest and dearest friend. Our histories are intertwined, given the experiences we have shared over the past half-century plus, from grade school in Manila to high school at Culver, and now to more frequent visiting since we are both in retirement mode.”

YOU CAN HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN! Please contact Lisa Himonas (Lisa.Himonas@socwk.utah.edu or 801-587-8387) if you are interested in providing a one-time gift, committing to a long-term pledge, or creating an endowment.

A PATRON OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

If it were a kid, it would be in middle school. The Social Justice Series: Allies for Equity, presented by the student group Voices of Diversity (VOD) and funded by the College of Social Work, is in its 12th year of existence. For nearly as many years, the series has enjoyed the financial support of the B.W. Bastian Foundation, which is committed to building community by contributing to programs and organizations that preserve the rights of individuals and promote equality. Each year, the theme of the Social Justice Series changes—this year, “Latinx United: Strength & Resilience”—yet the thought-provoking and often-entertaining lineup seems to consistently align with the mission and values of its generous benefactor. “The Social Justice Series runs on a very tight budget,” said Diversity Coordinator Irene Ota, who assists VOD students in organizing the events. “The Bastian Foundation’s ongoing contributions have enabled us to bring in some impactful and very talented guests we could not otherwise afford.”



Philanthropist Bruce Bastian supports the Social Justice Series through the B.W. Bastian Foundation.

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MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS

For ages, I casually quipped, "A good caterer is 90% of the success of any event." But then a funny thing happened ...

We were hosting our annual Awards Dinner on a lovely Tuesday evening in April. A mere 75 minutes before 70 near-graduates and generous donors were expected, Public Relations Specialist Jennifer Nozawa wondered aloud where the caterer was. A quick phone call assured us the food team was coming ... on Thursday. My first thought: Pizza.

Fortunately, our amazing staff sprang to action for the ultimate all-hands-on-deck, no-bad-idea, team-building experience. Adrenaline-inspired suggestions were shouted, calls were made, an offer was accepted, assignments were given, napkins were folded, and guests were greeted. As the Buca di Beppo food arrived, we updated the attendees. They were incredibly gracious—and sincerely amazed we had any food to offer.

The take-away from our take-out adventure—without any quipping: "Great people are 100% of the success of every event." Thanks to all of you for being part of our ongoing success!

— Lisa Himonas, Assistant Dean for Development

In honor of our guests' generosity of spirit and our saved dollars, we will give back to our students in two ways:

- In Fall 2017, we will host a study break for all students featuring treats from Buca di Beppo, of course.
- In Spring 2018, we will give an award to a student who persevered through unexpected circumstances. Feel free to suggest a name for this honor (Lisa.Himonas@socwk.utah.edu).





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As a first-generation, non-traditional college student, I encountered many challenges, but the Sarah Jane and Jeffrey D. Dunn Scholarship made a huge impact on my life. This scholarship will help me reach a goal I set nearly 10 years ago—to earn my MSW degree and serve my local and Native American communities on a professional level. Ahe'hee! (Thank you!)"

— Michelle Sanchez, MSW Student

