

THE UNIVERSITY OF
M O N T E V A L L O

Social Work Program
Station 6180

Dear Alumni:

As I will be retiring in May, I wanted to write you one last note. First, I want to thank you. You have given generously of your financial resources, your time to act as field instructors, guest speakers, to participate in assessment activities, calling with employment opportunities for our graduates and last, but not least contributing to the newsletter.

Next, I want to thank you for the opportunity to teach many of you. The beginning of every semester has been like opening a Christmas gift—I never knew what I was going to get. What I got was a group of hard working, and dedicated students. Through the newsletter, personal correspondence and seeing many of you at meetings, I have been fortunate to be able to follow your careers and they have been sterling. You work with the worst problems of humankind, make low salaries, and do the jobs no one else wants to touch. However, this State and our society would be a much poorer place were it not for your efforts. You have both my admiration and gratitude for the jobs you do every day. I hope you are as proud of yourselves as I am of you.

Not a semester has gone by that I haven't learned from my students. You shared your joys, sorrows, interests, and time with me in such a way that I could get to know you as a person and not just as a student. I recently was looking at some old student pictures and memories flooded through my mind. I remembered something personal about each student in the pictures.

As you know, the Social Work Program has a long and proud tradition. We also have an excellent reputation in the State in the practice community and academia. However, as Dr. Ron Manning once said, any success this program has had and its' reputation has not been because of the faculty, but because of our alumni. You have gone into the world of practice and made a name for yourselves. As a result of your efforts, the graduates who have followed you have had no trouble in obtaining employment. In other words, your reputation precedes them and helps them.

I have been blessed to have wonderful colleagues in social work, our interdisciplinary department, and across campus. I was also fortunate to have outstanding mentors like Miss Jeannette Niven, Mrs. Virginia Jones, Dr. Ethel Hall, Ms. Mary Edna Porter and Dr. Ron Manning in Social Work and Dr. Justin Fuller and Dr. Lucille Griffith in History. I have also worked with some fine administrators. I would also like to thank our wonderful secretaries, Ms. Amanda Fox and Ms. Judy Morris. Without their help, I could not have done the many things I have, including your newsletter.

I will support the Program in any way I can and I ask you to continue your faithful tradition of involving yourselves with the Program. I think you will be as impressed with the faculty as I am. Ms. Jeannie Duke will continue as Practicum Director and will help our new faculty become a part of the "Montevallo Tradition." Dr. Jason Newell began his career here last fall and has done an outstanding job of teaching and is integrating well into the program, the department, and the campus as a whole. Ms. Laurel Hitchcock will take over as the Program Director. She has both an MSW and an MPH and will soon complete her doctorate. She has years of practice in mental health and has supervised our graduates and interns.

On a more personal note, I have enjoyed every phone call, visit, Christmas card, and email from you. I appreciate all the pictures of your families (which have been proudly displayed in my office) and the updates from you. I will continue to live in Montevallo and have a few plans for retirement including taking some courses on campus, volunteering if the opportunity arises (I always said I would make someone a great volunteer clerk typist), working in my church, and traveling from time to time. If I can ever be of service to you, please let me know (Address: 585 County Road 104, Montevallo 35115; phone 665-1993; email vaughn222017@bellsouth.net).

In summary, it has been a great ride with you.

With many good memories and wishing you the best life has to offer,



Dr. Susan Vaughn



Social Work Newsletter

University of Montevallo

Social Work Day: Honoring Dr. Susan Vaughn

Spring 2009

Fall 2008 Graduates and places
of Employment

On March 31, 2009, the University of Montevallo Social Work Program celebrated a very special day. It was our annual Social Work Day where we invite students, alums and friends to celebrate National Social Work Month and initiate honor social work students into Phi Alpha Honorary Society. This year, the day was dedicated to honoring Dr. Susan Vaughn's retirement after 34 years of dedicated service to the university and to social work. Friends, alums, students and retired faculty came from all over Alabama and even out-of-state to share in this special recognition of Dr. Vaughn's many accomplishments and contributions.

Everyone had a memory to share and many placed their stories in a memory book. Senior social work students performed a very funny "Five Things Everyone Knows About Dr. Vaughn" skit. Jeannie Duke and Jason Newell, current faculty and Dr. Ron Manning, retired faculty, shared their experiences of working with Dr. Vaughn. Below you will read an excerpt from Dr. Manning's speech highlighting reasons so many love and cherish her. Best wishes to Dr. Vaughn!

It was 1977 when I came to the University of Montevallo as a young energetic member of the Social Work faculty... little did I know then that one of my new friends across the hall in Reynolds would one day be added to that list of accomplished and distinguished women who have made UM and the Social Work Program what they are today... that new friend, now a long-time close friend, was and still is Susan Vaughn.



Dr. Philip Williams, UM President, and Dr. Susan Vaughn

Dr. Vaughn came to UM one year before me so I've had a bird's eye view of virtually all of her career at UM. For the entire 30+ years, Dr. Vaughn has been first and foremost a teacher and a faculty member.

She has taught every course in the SW curriculum. Susan provided hands-on practicum instruction when she ran a faculty-based practicum unit at the Shelby County DHR for several years and served for many years as a faculty liaison and then for several years as Practicum Director.

I've never known anyone more dedicated to teaching and to students; and what I heard from students, they are in full agreement. Dr. Vaughn is a firm but infinitely fair teacher who could be counted on to go many extra miles for students, as many extra miles as necessary.

For the last 19 years Dr. Vaughn has been a teacher and the SW Program Director. Her initial success was guiding the Social Work program in its transition from a small independent department in the College of Arts and Sciences to one of several programs within the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

She established a loose but cohesive organization of social work alums that serves as a resource in many ways for the program and, interestingly, as a resource for recent graduates as there seems to be a constant flow of information between social work grads and Dr. Vaughn regarding job openings, conferences coming up, etc.

Throughout the years Dr. Vaughn participated in any number of significant campus-wide activities from Long Range Planning responsibilities, to several rounds on the Faculty Council/Faculty Senate, to Chairing the last SACS accreditation effort to mention just a few. She received the first ever UM Service Award at Founder's Day last year.

This partial list of accomplishments combined with those not mentioned is what will likely add Dr. Vaughn's name to the impressive list of influential women throughout the history of social work at UM and the state of Alabama but this list, even if it were complete, is not the reason that Dr. Vaughn will be missed...

For Susan is much more than a list of

- Olivia Acoff, Southland Nursing Home
- Mo Barnett, Shelby County DHR
- Jessica Jenkins, MSW program at UA
- Claudia McLawhorn, MSW program at UA
- Brooke Pettit, Shelby County DHR
- Jennifer Talley, MSW program at UA
- Candace Waligora, Shelby Ridge Nursing Home

accomplishments, no matter how complete that list might be... Susan will be missed because of the person that she is, for how she conducted herself and how she interacted with others while accomplishing those things listed before.

Susan goes about her business with a deep and abiding respect for all people... not an abstract respect for personkind but a willingness to engage everyone she encounters as a thoroughly unique and valuable individual. Similarly, Susan has a knack for accepting others as they are and presents herself in an open and transparent way, with nothing hidden... "what you see is what you get." Susan's work at UM has always been infused with a strong sense of fairness. Susan has been and continues to be a friend to all.

So, all of you will surely miss Susan, but the nice thing about it is that it's Dr. Vaughn that's retiring, Susan will still be here ... I don't know what will happen to Dr. Vaughn after retirement, but I'm quite sure that the Susan we know and love will still be the Susan we know and love...

Susan... Good friend... job well done... welcome to retirement.

By: Dr. Ron Manning, Retired Social Work Faculty Member

Gifts to the Programs

Barbara Bonfield
Jeanine Bozeman
Ruth Fitzgerald Brandenburg
Debra Carlson
Renea Guy Carpenter
Karen Sanders Crawford
Betty Crone
Maggie Plott Davenport
Jeannie Duke
Kelly Duke
Jim Ellis Fisher
Cymantha Foshee
Maria Goodman
Joyce Greathouse
Stephanie Hogg
Kristy Huddleston
Linda King

Kathy Hicks Lightsey
Karen Marks
Susan Connor Martin
Hannah Merrill
Krissa Lane Null
Freddie Penick
Amy Daniels Pribyl
Jeff Purvis
Lois Ann Ray
Mel Robinson
Ava Rozelle
Elaine Marion Salas
Heather Sims
Shaunte Slater
Lisa Smaha
Melissa Sumners
Ruth Truss

Heather Youngkin
Rebecca Turner

Eagles Allied Health Scholarship

Susan Vaughn

Niven's Scholarship

Connie Bracewell Arnwine
Joyce Greathouse

Dawson Scholarship

Mary Louis Dobbs
Joyce Greathouse

Porter Scholarship

Joyce Greathouse

What your gifts have made possible:

- \$798 Videos: Crisis, Suicide, Veterans
- \$310 Journals
- \$580 Newsletters for 08-09
- \$45 3 Students to BACHE Conference
- \$150 10 Students to Arise Conference

Special thanks to

Ms. Mel Dorrough Robinson

for her gifts to purchase texts that can be loaned to students for at least the next five years, videos for instruction, as well as an LCD projector.

Faculty News

Jeannie Duke

- President – Board of Directors, Alzheimer's of Central Alabama.
- Grant – Department of Human Resources, Statewide Child Welfare Training Grant, 2009.
- Alabama Gerontological Society, Planning Committee, Hotel Liaison Chair.
- Chair, Dancy Committee
- Merry Players – puppeteer – proceeds are donated to local charities
- Coordinated Social Work Day and Higher Ed. Lobby Day where social work students attended

Presentations-

- Alabama Gerontological Society Annual Conference – Presentation: April 16, 2009, "Intervener Survival", Birmingham, Alabama.
- Baccalaureate Program Director's Meeting – Presentation at National Meeting: March 20, 2009. "I'm Scared: Impact of Learning Styles on Field Education", Phoenix, Arizona.
- Alabama / Mississippi Social Work Education Conference – Presentation: October 3, 2008. "I'm Bored, I'm Scared: Affects of Learning Style Differences on Field Education". Auburn University, Alabama.

Jason Newell

Service/Awards

- VISN-7 VA Silver Commitment to Excellence in Research Award 2008
- VA Social Work Pre-Doctoral Fellowship in Research Award Recipient 2006-2008
- Pro-Bono consultant for Spirit of Hope Youth Ranch

Professional Presentations:

- Newell, J.M. & Davis, L.L. *A Comparative Analysis of Clinical and Administrative Occupational Stress in VA Health Care Workers*. Paper presented at The Interna-

tional Society for Traumatic Stress Studies: 24th Annual Meeting. Chicago, Illinois, November 2008.

- Davis, L.L., Drebing, C., Toscano, R., Riley, A., Drake, R., & Newell, J.M. *Supported Employment Versus Standard Vocational Rehabilitation for Veterans with PTSD*. Professional workshop conducted at The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies: 24th Annual Meeting. Chicago, Illinois, November 2008.

Publications:

- Newell, J. M. & MacNeil, G. Professional burnout, vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion fatigue: A review of theoretical terms, risk factors, and preventive methods for clinicians and researchers. Under review by *Best Practices in Mental Health: An International Journal*.
- Newell, J.M. (2008). Secondary traumatic stress reactions: A review of theoretical terms and methodological challenges. *Perspectives on Social Work* 6(2), 24-28.
- Davis, L. L., Ward, L. C., Rasmusson, A., Newell, J.M., Frazier, E., & Southwick, S. M. (2008). A placebo-controlled trial of guanfacine for the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder in veterans. *Psychopharmacology Bulletin* 41(1), 8-14.
- Newell, J.M. & Davis, L.L. (2008). Posttraumatic stress disorder and symptoms of impulsivity. *European Psychiatry Review* 1(2). In Press.
- Uezato, A., Davis, L., Newell, J.M., Frazier, E. (2008). Major depression and comorbid substance use disorders. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 21(1), 14-18.

Susan Vaughn

- Recipient of the Social Work Educator of the Year Award at the Alabama /Mississippi Conference at Auburn University on Oct. 2, 2008.
- Recipient of the first Faculty Senate Service Recognition Award.

Alumni News

Frank Bailey '67 is a retired school social worker. Frank is enjoying spending time with his twin 7yr old granddaughters and wife Joan. They currently reside in Steinhatchee, Florida.

Jim Parker '72 is a therapist for the Alabama Psychiatric Services in Madison.

Debra Weldon Carlson '79 received her M.Ed. in Special Education.

Judy Foster '76 is currently residing in Coaling, Alabama.

Robin Rushing '78 works for the Department of Transportation in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Karen Crawford '81 works in mental health at Brookwood Medical Center, Partial Hospitalization Program with "Inner Path" where she conducts intensive group therapy.

Robin Hatcher '84 currently works with Adult Services at the Hale County Department of Human Resources and is known for her work with Alzheimer's patients in the state and nationally.

Rhonda Jacks '85 works for the Partnership for Families, Children, and Adults in Tennessee. Rhonda reports Tennessee now offers the following licenses: LBSW, LMSW, LAPSW, and LCSW.

Freddie Penick '89 works at the UAB Hospital. Freddie recently traveled to South Africa and "had the time of our life!"

Lisa Holmes Shipley '92 Upon graduation, Lisa worked at the King's Ranch in Chelsea. She married her high school sweetheart and moved to Tennessee where she worked with youth at Free Will Baptist Family Ministries for eight years. After the birth of her two daughters, she took time to raise her children and began a catering business. Three years ago she reentered the field is presently working with adolescent sex offenders.

Heather Youngkin '92 had a 'memorable, fulfilling career in social work that lasted over ten years.' She is currently an elementary teacher where she uses social work skills daily with the children and their families.

Michelle Hall Gibbons '93 works with Southern Care Hospice. The hospice recently expanded

coverage to Montevallo, Calera, and Columbiana.

Angie House '94 is on the board of the Sprit of Hope Youth Ranch which helps to emotionally heal children in foster care, DHR custody, and other stressing situations by allowing them to interact with horses that have been saved from abuse or neglect. Angie is a supervisor with Public Health.

Aundrea Yohn '94 is in the Department of Housing at the University of South Alabama. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Industrial Design and Development.

Cindy Huddleston Deerman '95 works with Children's Hospital.

Kathy Hicks Lightsey '96 is the Outreach and Education Coordinator at the Gift of Life Foundation, in Montgomery. She has been employed with the agency over 11 years. Kathy and her husband, **Frank '97**, live in Deatsville, with their two children: Braden, 7, and Alli Ryan, 4.

Stephanie Garrard '99 has completed the Masters program at Alabama and is currently an LCSW. She serves in individual, group and family therapy with the Alabama Psychiatric Services in Mobile.

John Pinion '99 is a Senior Social Work Supervisor for the Walker County DHR. He is married with one child, and serves as a pastor for Antioch Baptist Church.

Lisa Smaha '99 is a Probation Officer with the Juvenile Court of Shelby County, where she works with adolescents and families as part of the Drug Court Program.

Maria Cooper '00 serves as Social Work Supervisor of Child Protective Services Investigations for the Cabarrus County, North Carolina, Department of Social Services. She and husband Chris reside in Concord, NC.

Amy Mims '00 works at Spring Gardens.

Karen Smith '00 recently moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee. She is a certified SAMA Instructor, Wilderness First Responder, Low Ropes Instructor, and Alpine Tower Leader. She has worked with the Peace Corps, Camp ASCCA, and most recently Three Springs, Inc.

Maggie Plott Davenport '01 serves as the Patient First Care Coordinator/ Public Health SW II for Autauga County Public Health.

Cortni Bookout Miller '03 works with Cullman County DHR where she works primarily in On-Going Family Preservation services. Cortni married in October 2006 and welcomed son David Cash Miller in May 2007.

Amy Daniel Pribyl '05 is a Day Treatment Counselor at UAB Community Psychiatry.

Stephanie Hogg '06 is a Medical Social Worker for Hospice Complete in Birmingham.

Michelle Lee '06 is in the MSW program at the University of Alabama.

Heather Sims '06 is an Americorps Vista Volunteer for Independent Living Resources where she helps the agency develop a structured volunteer program for a year long project entitled "Disability Empowerment."

Lance Day '07 works with Athens Justice Project. AJP is a non-profit providing social services to criminal with substance abuse problems and also operates an employment enhancement program targeting those struggling with reentry to society.

Valerie Schroder '07 is currently working on her MSW at the University of Alabama. She reports that six UM graduates are currently enrolled in UA's MSW program.

Kelly Duke '08 is a Family and Child Specialist for Shelby County Wrap. Kelly recently received her licensure.

Emily Honeycutt Milam '08 received her license in February.

Shaunte Slater '08 is a case worker for the Alabama Youth Home in Oneonta.

With Condolences

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to **Ms. Ann Kimbrough Kelly** on the loss of her husband, Mr. A.G. Kelly.

We also send our thoughts to **Ms. Jeanine Bozeman '51**, whose husband, Dr. T. Wally Bozeman, passed away last March. Dr. Wally graduated from Samford University and the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He retired from Louisiana College where he taught New Testament.

Those we've lost

Leila Ford Galloway '26, 99. passed away on March 8, 2009.

Mrs. Galloway was a member of the American Association of University Women. She was very active at the University of Montevallo while taking courses, as a member of Alumni Affairs.

I met Mrs. Galloway during my internship with the Hospice agency that was involved in her care. She was the first patient who was assigned to me by my supervisor once I began carrying my own caseload. From the first day I met Mrs. Galloway, she was full of stories about her life as a social worker while in Columbia, South America. She was always smiling when she talked about days as a student at the University of Montevallo.

Even though I only had a few visits with Mrs. Galloway during her stay at the assisted living facility, I enjoyed the time that I spent with her. Mrs. Galloway was a very amazing woman who had a passion for helping others.

I am not the only Senior Social Work student who had the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Galloway. One other student, Nicole Passante took care of Mrs. Galloway during her stay at the assisted living facility. Nicole had this to say about Mrs. Galloway: "I enjoyed going to Mrs. Galloway's room and talking to her. She was a very interesting lady." When I asked her for some advice about becoming a social worker, her exact words to me were, "Always be prepared for anything." Nicole was with Mrs. Galloway when she passed away.

She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

~~*Monique Williams, Senior Social Work Student*

Calee Johnson '99, 31, passed away on November, 21, 2008. She was employed by UAB Hospital working with women and infant services, helping hospital visitors and families arrange transportation and accommodations, and acquire safety seats for newborns. In a Farewell article in the Sunday, January 25, 2009, edition of the Birmingham News, her husband, Kevin, said, "She was just so passionate about her job and life in general." We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Calee's husband, parents, and family.

Higher Ed Day

Higher Ed Day is an advocacy rally that takes place in Montgomery. each year. The purpose of Higher Ed Day is for students from different universities to show their support for funding of higher education. It reminds legislators that students want their voices to be heard when it comes to their education.

As a Senior Social Work Student, I got a chance to attend the annual Higher Ed Day for the first time. There was a lot of student support. Other Senior Social Work Students were also in attendance: Georgia McGuire, Debra Irvin-Coleman, Darlene Smith, Mandy Adams, TaKeshia Gunn, Detrick Bettis, and Leah'netta Robinson."

I enjoyed this experience, because I got a chance to be a part of something that affects me on a personal level. I encourage all students to attend Higher Ed Day in the future. If you want something to change, don't sit around and wait on others to speak up on your behalf. Get Involved!

National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

I attended the 17th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect: Focus on the Future: Strengthening Families and Communities held at the Marriott Atlanta Marquis March 30-4, 2009. The conference was an amazing learning experience. I was able to act as a session monitor and attend the conference for free. I made several contacts and learned an invaluable amount from the sessions. I attended a pre-conference seminar lead by Nikki Berger from Georgia Center for Child Advocacy that certified me as a Facilitator for Stewards of Children. Stewards of Children is a sexual abuse prevention program created by Darkness to Light to educate organizations and communities on the impact and prevention of sexual abuse against children.

~~*Katie McGlothlen*

Advocacy Day 2008

The Social Work Program sponsored its annual Advocacy Day Conference on October 31st. The theme was crisis intervention and included speakers from The Crisis Center, Birmingham, Dr. Mary Bartlett, UM Counseling and Kimble Forrester from Alabama Arise. As the economy has worsened, crisis lines and centers have experienced an increase in crisis/suicide calls while at the same time, resources for assisting callers have diminished. Dr. Williams was the luncheon speaker. We had approximately 50 attendees made up of students and community social workers, most of these UM alums. The senior graduating class honored Dr. Susan Vaughn with a trophy, picture album and gift and spoke of their regard for her as a teacher and mentor.

We were glad to visit with the following alums: **Donna Allen '78, Vonda Baty '05, Jim Ellis Fisher, Alan Hallmark '05, Stephanie Hogg '06, Leslie Jones '97, Paula Tall '87, and Susan Wilder White '88.**

Please send us any pictures you have of

Social Work Day 2009.

You may mail them in or email to foxat@montevallo.edu

Claudia McLawhorn



We are proud to report that **Claudia McLawhorn '08** is the 2009 recipient of the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award. UM Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Kimberly Barrett, presented the award at Honors Day held April 22nd. The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award is a national recognition, limited to carefully selected colleges and Universities. While achievements and scholarship are considerations, spirit, compassion, honesty, humanitarianism and depth of character are its hallmarks. It is the one award for which no student can compete except by virtue of who he or she is as a human being.

Congratulations, Claudia! You are deserving of this award and we are very proud of you!

National Conference on Undergraduate Research



On the morning of Wednesday, April 15th, 2009 we departed early on a very long bus ride with other University of Montevallo students to the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse to participate in the 23rd Annual National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR). While there, we had the opportunity to represent Montevallo by presenting our research projects to a widespread audience. It was very exciting to participate in the weeklong conference and to get the chance to see various topics and presenters from colleges and universities from all over the nation.

~ Tara Bradley

My experience at NCUR was a once in a lifetime opportunity that I will cherish. It was somewhat overwhelming to think of going to a "National" conference, but when I arrived, everything fell into place, and it was great to be one of the first presenters of the conference. The University of Wisconsin- LaCrosse was a lovely campus and everyone there did a great job of facilitating anything we needed. Although the trip was long, I had the opportunity to do a lot of sight seeing and got to know some other students in the process. Not only will the experiences at NCUR stay with me, they will also aid me in furthering and continuing research of At-Risk and Trauma populations.

~ Jennifer Travis-Scott

BACHE Women's Conference

I definitely enjoyed the BACHE Women Conference at Miles College held on March 3, 2009. There were several great speakers who spoke about what influenced them and what needs to change in this state. Healthcare is one of the fields I am interested in and I heard a lot of information about how it affects Alabama. I also think I might have an interest in criminal justice, now. Furthermore, I would like to compliment Dr. Kimberly Barrett, VP for Student Affairs, and Jennifer Travis-Scott, SWK major, on a job well done for their presentations. They made me feel proud to be a student of Montevallo at the conference. Overall, this conference was a great opportunity for any student especially an incoming social worker such as myself. Thanks alumni for giving me this opportunity to experience

~~Shakari Beechem, Junior

I also attended the BACHE Conference. I would like to thank Montevallo's Alumni for the wonderful opportunity and sending several of us to the Conference. During the conference we had a chance to hear about several issues such as Human Trafficking, Voting Rights for Felons, problems with the Tutwiler Prison, and many other issues. Although all of the guest speakers were good, my favorite was our very own Jennifer C. Travis-Scott. She spoke on Protecting our Elderly and the different types of abuse they endure. She was well prepared, organized, and opened our eyes to an issue many people tend to overlook. Great job, Jennifer! Overall, I had a great time, learned a lot, and had a chance to hear and meet some interesting people thanks to Montevallo's Alumni.

~~Lesley Long, Junior

Arise Conference

On February 10th, 2009, 10 UM Social Work majors attended a conference on health care access hosted by Alabama Arise at Birmingham Southern College. The conference covered several topics of concern in regard to the present and future conditions of health care in the state of Alabama. One of the workshops we attended discussed the very serious and growing issue of the primary care physician shortage, a problem felt nationwide that may have an even bigger impact on a rural state like ours. Some other topics discussed were the role of local schools in the health of children and the impact the upcoming "baby boomers" will have in our state. Also discussed was the seriousness of HIV and AIDS in the state of Alabama and how

ignorance on this disease is all too often one of the biggest killers. The infant mortality rate in Alabama has become a significant problem as the poverty rate continues to increase. Moreover, poor physical health was also mentioned during this session with Dr. Richard Powers.

This Health Care Conference established a broad understanding of how low-income families suffer from the rising cost of health coverage, and broadened the minds of every individual who attended with shocking statistics. We would like to thank the University of Montevallo alumni for providing us with this wonderful opportunity.

~~ Tara Bradley and Jessica Shierling, Seniors

UM Social Work Students and Faculty Participate in Birmingham Homeless Survey

Recently a group of 6 Social Work Students and 2 Social Work faculty members participated in the annual Point in Time Homeless Survey in Birmingham, Alabama.

The survey consisted of 18 general questions investigating the means by which the homeless in Birmingham secure resources to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing. The data gathered is used to help guide development of any new programs and to change programs to best fit the needs of homeless citizens. This survey helps to recognize and understand any changes in the Birmingham homeless population. For example, the 2007 study revealed an increasing number of Iraqi and Afghani vets on the streets. This information helped local VA programs get new housing options for men and women who served their country.

The interviewing began on Thursday January 29th and ended on Friday January 30th. Interview sites included local soup kitchens, emergency shelters, churches, the Salvation Army, and local streets and parks. Two UM Social Work students, Jessica Shierling and Billie Robinson, completed special interview training and relayed this information to other students and faculty volunteering to participate in the survey. Jessica Shierling was par-

ticularly moved by some of the harsh conditions the homeless endured; incidentally it was a very cold day when the interviewing occurred and many of the homeless were resigned to spending the night in parks and alleys. Jessica stated "I enjoyed the experience of being able to have one-on-one conversations with the participants. A quote from two participants at Kelly-Ingram Park that lifted my heart was "Thank you for helping us, we appreciate everything that you are doing"! Social Work student Nicole Passante interviewed individuals at the Salvation Army in downtown Birmingham. "Most of the people I interviewed were men ages 40 and older. I noticed that one man I spoke with, who had been homeless for quite sometime, was trying to keep as much of a positive attitude as one could have under those of circumstances. He makes answers into jokes, but he uses this to deal with the life he lives everyday." Student, Tara Bradley, interviewed at the Church of the Reconciler located in downtown Birmingham. "I suppose one of the things that struck me (that really should not have surprised me) was how many of the homeless were veterans! About half of them were, and that's a pretty high amount. Many of them did manage to have their health care needs taken care of through VA benefits (well, at least

the physical health care needs) so that is something at least. I'm glad I volunteered. There is a huge difference between reading about something, even seeing it from a distance and actually seeing and experiencing it up close. It becomes even more real. I almost wish everyone could do this at least once in his or her life. I think it would probably change some things for many people."

Social work faculty members, Ms. Jeannie Duke and Dr. Jason Newell also participated in the surveys with the social work students. Dr. Newell interviewed with students in local parks and on the streets, he states "this was an excellent learning experience for these students as they were able to sit and talk with homeless persons and understand that being homeless is often associated with other social problems, such as being mentally ill." Ms. Duke interviewed with students at the Church of the Reconciler, a day shelter that serves breakfast. According to Ms. Duke, "we found several participants who reported having homes but due to harsh economic conditions came to the day shelter for a hot meal each day. This was surprising to students who expected to find only the homeless using the services at the Church."

Tuscaloosa Donates Diapers By: Karrisa Bursch

A dirty diaper is not many people's favorite thing, but what happens when a family is not able to purchase a clean one? Diapers are a necessity some families in Tuscaloosa cannot take for granted.

The Tuscaloosa County Health Department realized many low-income mothers were in need of simple necessities such as diapers. Patient First Supervisor Krystal Hasselvander and Claudia McLawhorn, a health department student intern from the University of Montevallo majoring in social work, began the program to distribute diapers to needy families after contacting many women in that situation.

"We saw a need in the community for low-income mothers," McLawhorn said. The University is also getting in-

involved with helping the cause. Fifteen Sociology 101 classes are contributing to the drive as part of extra credit.

Since the Sociology 101 curriculum is currently covering social class and poverty, the sociology professor thought it would be fitting to get involved, McLawhorn said.

"The sociology professor saw it as a good opportunity to teach students about families in need," McLawhorn said.

McLawhorn said it is a good chance for UA students to get involved with helping the community.

"It's a great opportunity to help people in the community," McLawhorn said. "It's an excellent idea to teach the value of community service to students."

On a voluntary basis, the Sociology 101 students bring one or two packs of diapers to class during a one-week period in order to receive extra credit.

The diapers will be handed out to families in need who utilize the services provided by the Tuscaloosa County Health Department.

The University has also been contacted about getting permission to put collection boxes in buildings on campus.

The diaper drive ran from Oct. 27 to Nov. 4. However, diaper donations will still be accepted.

"The Tuscaloosa County Health Department greatly appreciates the University of Alabama," McLawhorn said.

ALUMNI NEWS FORM

Please complete this form and return it to us so that we may include information about you in our next newsletter.

Name _____ Year of Graduation _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail _____

Place of Employment _____

Position _____

News _____

I wish my gift to be applied to the following:

_____ DVDS for the classroom

_____ Louise White Dawson Scholarship

_____ Student registration fees at professional meetings

_____ Mary Edna Porter Scholarship

_____ Unrestricted (to meet the needs of the Program)

_____ Jeanette Niven Scholarship

"You can only become truly accomplished at something you love. Don't make money your goal. Instead, pursue the things you love doing, and then do them so well that people can't take their eyes off you." ~Maya Angelou