At our annual Social Work Day celebration March 27, the Social Work Program was honored to have Ms. Joyce Greathouse ('56) as our keynote speaker. Ms. Greathouse spoke of her years as a social worker in Alabama with Children’s Aid Society and about the important individuals who influenced her passion for advocacy and politics in Alabama including her parents and Prof. Hallie Farmer, who taught history at the University of Montevallo from 1927 until 1956. As part of her legacy to social work in the State of Alabama, Ms. Greathouse recently established the Joyce Greathouse Advocacy Writing Contest as part of an effort to engage students at the University of Montevallo in social welfare policy and political advocacy in the State of Alabama. Ms. Greathouse was present to honor this year’s winners, Natasha Langner and Jennifer Colacurto.

This year, the Social Work Program inducted nine new members to Phi Alpha, the Social Work Honor Society. We also recognized the contribution of some of our field education partners by awarding the 2012 Outstanding Practicum Agency Instructor of the Year to Ms. Valencia Pruitt of the UAB Comp Clinic and the 2012 Outstanding Practicum Agency of the Year to the UAB Obstetrical Complications Clinic. Finally, we awarded five scholarships to social work students who will be completing practicum placements in the 2012-213 academic year.

Note from the Director

Dear alumni, students and friends of the UM Social Work Program,

During Social Work Month this year, I began thinking a lot about the importance of investing, specifically how we give or devote our time, talent, money and other resources to achieve something. For me, the “something” I am most interested in is the education of our students who will become the future social workers in Alabama and beyond. Now more than ever, we need trained and dedicated social workers to help people overcome poverty, inequality, violence, trauma, loss and pain, and to strengthen and support the country’s safety net programs which are under continual and constant threat of being dismantled. Over the past academic year, numerous investments have been made in our social work program by the University, faculty, staff, students, alumni and our community partners, and I wanted to share some of them with you:

1. The UM Social Work Program was reaccredited in February by the Council on Social Work Education for another eight years – until 2020. Our Social Work Program has been accredited since 1974 and demonstrates a long tradition of commitment to quality social work education by the University and its faculty.

2. Due to the increase in social work majors over the past several years, we have hired another social work faculty member for our program. Dr. Meredith Tetloff, from the University of Georgia, will be joining the faculty in the fall. I would like to thank the administration at the University of Montevallo including the Chair of the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Dr. Clark Hultquist, and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Mary Beth Armstrong, for approving and supporting this new faculty line for the social work program.

3. In 2011, through a generous donation, Ms. Joyce Greathouse (’56) established the Joyce Greathouse Advocacy Writing Contest to engage social work students at the University of Montevallo in social welfare policy and political advocacy in the State of Alabama. She hopes this contest will motivate social work students at Montevallo to become knowledgeable about issues and active as advocates.

Other investments included the many alumni and community partners who serve as guest speakers, agency practicum instructors and mentors for our students; recruitment presentations completed by our students to high school students about the profession of social work; and the numerous financial donations to support scholarships and other student activities throughout the year. I am also very proud that the University of Montevallo joined the Alabama chapter of the National Association of Social Work (NASW) as an official sponsor of the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative, an effort to secure federal and state investments in professional social work through recruitment, retention and retraining. To learn more about this initiative, visit: http://www.socialworkreinvestment.org.

I want to encourage all of you to make an investment in the social work profession. This newsletter contains many examples of how an investment of time or money has made a difference in the lives of our social work students. Please consider donating your time or money to the UM Social Work Program. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of service to you.

Best,

Laurel Iverson Hitchcock
Ph.D., MPH, LCSW

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Like our Facebook page! From F/B simply search “University of Montevallo Social Work Program” or use this link (http://www.facebook.com/pages/University-of-Montevallo-Social-Work-Program/108227742565857). Please “like” our F/B page and receive updates on the program and our alumni. Also, please suggest our page to any other friends so that our F/B community can grow.

Follow us on Twitter! In Twitter, search for @MontevalloSWK. You can also follow Dr. Laurel Hitchcock (@laurelhitchcock), who uses Twitter with students in the classroom. To learn more about Twitter, visit the website: www.Twitter.com.

Check out our YouTube channel, SWKMontevallo at http://www.youtube.com/user/SWKMontevallo. Watch videos produced by UM Social Work students, faculty and staff.
Facility Updates

Ms. Jeannie Duke

Presentations:
UAB Gerontology Conference in January 2012
Two workshops at the 2012 Alabama Gerontological Society Annual Conference in April 2012

Activities:
• University of Alabama, School of Social Work, Board of Friends, Chair: Development Committee
• Member of UM Geography Search Committee
• Member of UM Social Work Search Committee
• Supervised 13 seniors in practicum

Dr. Laurel Hitchcock

Publications & Presentations:


Activities:
• Member of Faculty Senate, 2011-2013
• Chair of UM Social Work Search Committee
• Faculty Adviser for Alabama Arise

Dr. Jason Newell

Publications & Presentations:


Activities:
• University Faculty Fellow for Housing and Residence Life (3rd term)
• Member of task force for the development of a Liberal Studies major
• Member of Freshman First-Year Advisory Board
• Member of Freshman Pre-Registration Committee
• Member of search committee for Vice President for Academic Affairs
• Recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award, 2012
• Faculty Adviser, Phi Alpha Honor Society
• Faculty Adviser, UM Social Work Club
• Faculty Adviser, Active Minds

Congratulations to Dr. Jason Newell, recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award, 2012

(L to R): Dr. Newell, Dr. Mary Beth Armstrong, and Dr. Clark Hultquist.

2012-2013 Social Work Scholarship Recipients

The following students received scholarships from the UM Social Work Program:
Jessica “Shay” Daniel - Roxie Craig Scholarship in Social Work
Jennifer Colacurto - Jeannette Niven Social Work Scholarship
Tracey Johnson - Jeannette Niven Social Work Scholarship
Tiffney Hester - Mary Edna Porter Family and Child Scholarship

Jennifer Thiel - Louise White Dawson Scholarship in Social Work

Phi Alpha:

Phi Alpha is the national honor society for social work students. Phi Alpha recognizes academic achievement among undergraduate and graduate social work students. An undergraduate student is eligible for membership after achieving the following national and local chapter requirements:
1. Declared social work as a major or second major
2. Junior or senior level status
3. Completion of at least 8 semester hours of required social work courses
4. Admission to the Social Work Program
5. Overall 3.0 GPA
6. Overall 3.25 GPA in social work courses
7. Pay a one-time national chapter due of $20.00 and local chapter due of $10.00

Congratulations to our new Phi Alpha members: Miracle Benson, Kasandra Coleman, Jessica “Shay” Daniel; Kaylee Hale; Joanna Hawkins; Tiffney Hester; Adriane Matherne; Emily McKinney; and Leigh Williams.

If you are interested in Phi Alpha, please contact Dr. Newell for a membership application. If you are interested in learning more about Phi Alpha, you may visit the national website at www.phialpha.org. Students are inducted into Phi Alpha annually on Social Work Day.

(L to R): Dr. Newell, Dr. Mary Beth Armstrong, and Dr. Clark Hultquist.

2012 Phi Alpha Inductees
THE BIG EVENT: Social Work Club members joined in The Big Event on Saturday, April 14, when nearly 400 students representing 23 organizations across campus participated in a one-day service project in the Montevallo community. Club members were assigned to trim hedges, cut down limbs, trim excess shrubs, pick up trash and get assistance with weed trimming at a local resident’s home. (Right to left: Kelsey Prestridge, Amber Sutton, Jeff Sutton and Stephanie Clifton.)

ALABAMA SOCIAL WORK CONFERENCE: From February 22 to 24, Social Work major Joanna Hawkins attended the Alabama Social Work Conference in Perdido Beach, Fla. Here is what she wrote about the conference:

“What a wonderful experience I had at the Alabama Conference of Social Work. The workshops that were held offered something for everyone. I met many social workers across the state. The two workshops that interested me the most were: ‘Crossroads of the Personal and Professional: Social Work, Siblings, and Family Care-giving’ and ‘Social Workers at the Digital Divide: Rethinking Group Work Practice Using Telecommunication and Web-based Strategies.’ The first workshop mentioned above about care-giving not only provided useful information for workers while helping families in their practice, but also gave useful information for my personal life if and when the time comes when I may be involved in care-giving of a family member. This workshop provided valuable information on coping and talking with other family members to provide the best possible solutions for family care-giving. The second workshop about the digital divide provided useful information on how to start groups online. It also talked about ethical and confidential issues that may arise from using today’s latest technology. The instructor on each of these workshops will be mailing her PowerPoint presentation and resource guides to me so I may use this information later in practice. This conference showed me how powerful a group of people working toward a cause can be. These social workers work in a variety of different fields across the state but have one goal in mind: to provide the best possible resources to their clients to enhance their quality of life. What a wonderful opportunity I was given to be able to participate in this conference. I wanted to thank the Social Work Program for affording me the opportunity to participate in the conference this year.”

ADVOCATING IN WASHINGTON D.C.: In February, 2012, Kelsey Allison, a senior social work student, went to Washington, D.C., to attend a national suicide prevention conference. Here is what she wrote about the experience:

“Five years ago, ‘suicide’ was just a word to me. That was until a close family friend took his own life. Little did I know that three years later I would stand in his shoes, believing that the only way to escape my depression was to take my own life. Now the word ‘suicide’ has become so much more to me. It has inspired action and a passion to make suicide prevention my goal in life. That is why, in February, I was able to travel to our nation’s capitol to meet with my members of Congress and urge their support of legislation furthering suicide prevention, education and research. My presence and involvement was part of a national movement coordinated by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention as a part of the Annual Advocacy Forum. I was able to meet with six of my representatives including Representatives Bachus, Roby, Bonner and Sewell as well as Senators Shelby and Sessions. This gave me the opportunity to advocate for the 37,000 individuals who take their lives each year. Throughout the conference, I was able to observe how vital it is that we, as social workers, give a voice to those individuals who are unable to speak for themselves. This conference allowed me to witness how advocacy is the foundation of social work and all that we do.”

Social Work Club

Thanks to the many efforts from our club officers for this academic year.

President: Amber Dupes
Vice President: Carmen Lambert
Secretary: Molly Mcconville
Treasurer: Joanna Hawkins

In November and December, Social Work Club members secured donations for needy families and completed a coat drive with Shelby Emergency Assistance. Starting in January, as an ongoing effort, the Social Work Club collected diapers and other items to be donated to SEA for needy families. Under the leadership of Amber Dupes, the Social Work Club was able to secure funding from state Sen. Cam Ward to maintain the Backpack Buddies program on campus for another year. Great job, Amber! Finally, the Social Work Club, in partnership with the Counseling and Psychology programs, collected stuffed animals to be donated to children admitted into inpatient psychiatric care at Hillcrest Hospital.

The Campus Life Advisory Committee voted in April to approve Active Minds as an official campus organization. Active Minds is a student-run mental health awareness, education and advocacy organization on the college campus. It is designed to utilize peer outreach in order to increase students’ awareness of mental health issues and symptoms while providing individuals with information about resources and with encouragement to seek help. The Social Work Club was essential in chartering this new chapter on campus. Amber Dupes, Social Work Club president, and a student at the UM Counseling Center completed all the documents for submission to the Office of Student Life. Dr. Jason Newell will serve as chair of the organization next year.
My Volunteer Experience

By Samantha Willis

This spring, I have had the privilege of being a volunteer at Special Equestrians. This organization facilitates therapeutic horseback riding and equine assisted therapy to people with emotional, physical, mental and developmental disabilities. Since 1985, the organization has provided therapy to people living in Jefferson, Shelby and adjacent counties who have been diagnosed with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, traumatic injuries and many other physical and behavioral disorders. The objective of the organization is to increase the independence and quality of life of their riders. Special Equestrians relies on more than 200 volunteers annually to continue daily operations.

I am a sidewalk at Special Equestrians, meaning that my job, firstly, is to ensure that the rider does not fall off the horse, and secondly, to gently encourage the rider to follow the directions given by the instructor to the best of his or her ability. The instructors, therapists and volunteers at Special Equestrians use a strength-based approach in guiding the riders. Every week, the riders learn new riding skills, move core muscles through exercises, play riding games and go on trail rides through the woods. The riders I have worked with have stayed the same from week to week. This is empowering to the riders to have this type of consistency every session because the rider often feels more comfortable with a person who knows them and their personal strengths. The most rewarding experience I have had at Special Equestrians was when I was giving a child positive feedback, and he said, “Thank you.” This was so important to me because he is a nonverbal rider. This made me realize again why I get out of bed every Saturday morning at 7 a.m. to volunteer.

The program helps give the rider interpersonal skills, independence, learning skills, determination, coordination, listening skills and structure. This experience has taught me assertiveness, persistence, patience and how to work with this population more effectively. It is gratifying to see the riders learning, growing and improving every week. For more information, visit the Special Equestrians website at: http://www.SpecialEquest.org.

May and August Graduating Social Work Majors:

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING GRADUATES!

Kelsey Quinn Allison
Miracle D. Benson
Amber R. Dupes
Joanna Grizzle Hawkins
Charles Jermaine Jackson
Stephen Rashad Jackson
Carmen Michelle Lambert
Molly E. McConville
Delisha R Moorer
Tabitha Joycelyn Perry
Kelsey L. Prestridge
Samantha J. Smith
Melanie Dawn Springsteen
Jessica Lynn Vance
Leigh Williams

Student Updates:

Jennifer Colacurto, a senior social work major, is the first ever recipient of the Margaret S. Odum Gerontology Scholarship Award, given by the Alabama Gerontological Society. Jennifer was nominated for this award by Dr. Jason Newell.

Three social work students (Ashley Malone, Abby Richburg and Adriane Matherne) were honored for their service as Falcon Scholars in Action with the University of Montevallo. The University of Montevallo has partnered with Shelby County Community Services to develop the University of Montevallo Falcon Scholars in Action (UMFSIA) program. Through this program, twenty-five UM students are selected each year to serve clients in agencies and programs throughout Shelby County. Ashley worked with Shelby Emergency Assistance and Abby and Adriane worked at the Juvenile Detention Center.

The following social work students wore Service Learning Honor Cords at graduation May 5: Carmen Lambert, Joanna Hawkins, Miracle Benson, Melanie Springsteen, Samantha J. Smith, Leigh Williams, Jessica Vance and Tabitha Perry. Service Learning Honor Cords, as well as a certificate of recognition on Honors Day, are awarded to students who demonstrate excellence in service to the community. Criteria for recognition include the following: 1) a minimum GPA of 2.75; 2) one of the following: 300 documented hours of service to the community; completion of four service learning courses; or 150 documented hours of service to the community and completion of two service learning courses.

On April 17, Miracle Benson and Tabitha Perry helped to advocate for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month at City Hall in Sylacauga as part of their practicum placement with Talladega County Department of Human Resources. At the ceremony, all in attendance released blue balloons, which represented the bruises that abused and neglected children often bear.

Shay Daniels has been volunteering with University of Montevallo Best Buddies Chapter and writes this about the program: The Best Buddies experience is surely one to cherish. This organization (at Montevallo) strives toward facilitating one-on-one friendships between college buddies and persons with an intellectual and/or developmental disability. My buddy and I had an incredible time this year, enjoying doing activities that any other friends would do together, and also communicating with each other via mail. I would definitely encourage students to become involved in this amazing and rewarding organization. It is imperative to refrain from overlooking minority populations, as we can learn a great deal from them. For example, Best Buddies made various trips to the United Cerebral Palsy facility in Birmingham, and I remember meeting a man there who possesses countless talents and abilities. Sometimes “disabilities” need to be viewed as ABILITIES. Best Buddies has taught me that.
ALUMNI UPDATES

Chelcey (Thompson) Myrick ('09) is now working for Housing First, Inc. under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) grant. Housing first was the only grantee in Alabama. She started graduate school in May.

Shayne Morgan ('11) started working at the Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging in April 2012.

Paul Dompierre ('99) works for Jefferson Blount St. Clair Mental Health Authority (JBS) with “Project Rebound” as a “crisis counselor.”

Freddie Penick ('99) is a social worker at UAB.

Brandy Tate ('06) and her husband had their first baby September 7, 2011. His name is Connor and we are doing very well and learning lots of new things in our new roles as parents.

The following UM Social Work graduates are attending or have recently been accepted to graduate school at the University of Alabama's School of Social Work:

- Joanna Hawkins
- Julia David Shipanga
- Dotti Bailey
- Jessica Beal
- Sonya McCurdy ('03) was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society in April and also was presented with the Master Scholar Award by the School of Social Work at the University of Alabama this spring.

Jessica Beal ('11) is working as a family advocate at the St. Elizabeth’s Head Start program in Selma.

Angela Slaughter ('10) works for Gateway Family Services in Birmingham, AL.

GIFTS TO THE PROGRAM

- Fees and mileage for students to attend local conferences (10 students in 2010, 10 students in 2011 and 11 students in 2012)
- Textbooks for use in classroom - Textbooks for use in the following classes: SWK 350, SWK 400, SWK 410 and SWK 420. These textbooks save a student taking SWK 350 in their junior year $147, and a student taking SWK 400, SWK 410 and SWK 420 in their senior year $232.
- Instructional DVDs for classroom use
- Journals and books purchased and given to library
- Postage for the mailing of the Program newsletter twice a year
- New licensure prep material in Fall 2011
- BSS Homecoming Reception in February 2011 and 2012
- Creation of the Joyce Greathouse Advocacy Writing Contest in 2011
- Refreshments for Social Work Club functions
- Digital voice recorders for the Program’s Portable Skills Lab
- New software for licensure prep test in Spring 2012
- Scholarships

LICENSURE COMPUTER TEST AVAILABLE FOR ALUMNI USE:

The Social Work Program has recently updated the LBSW software for the licensure practice test, which is available by appointment Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM on campus only. If you wish to take a practice exam, contact the BSS office at (205) 665-6180 or bssdept@montevallo.edu. The Program also has study materials available in the Carmichael Library under Course Reserves that can be used in the library.
MESSAGE FROM OUR ALUMS:
For the past year, three alumni from the UM Social Work Program, Kellie Williams ('11), Paul Dompeirre ('99) and Tiffany McCollough ('11) have been working with survivors and communities affected by the April 2 tornados of 2011. Here is a report of their work:

Project Rebound is a federally funded program that was put in place to reach the April 27th tornado survivors. Paul, Tiffany, and I are crisis counselors and are employed through JBS Mental Health Authority. We work with the Birmingham group in all the affected areas. We have a main office in Fairfield where three of the four teams meet to discuss things. The four groups cover Pratt City, Pleasant Grove, Concord, North Smithfield, McDonald Chapel, Fultondale, Blount County, and St. Clair County. Our services provide free crisis counseling to those directly and indirectly impacted by the April storms. We also help find the survivors anything they may need to get them back on their feet. Our services are free of charge and available to anyone affected. Project Rebound has teams in Tuscaloosa and Cullman, and they do the same thing as the Birmingham group. We have a phone line that is open 24 hours a day with an available crisis counselor at all times. What is special about our group is that we will go and meet with the client where THEY are comfortable meeting. Along with counseling, we also present at churches and schools. We have been in countless schools within the Birmingham area promoting safety education, but most important is the message that we give on emotions and the importance of talking about your feelings. So many children are scared of bad weather and do not talk about it. We talk to them and listen to them share their feelings and help them pick a person they trust to talk to. We work events, attend meetings, neighborhood associations, and walk on foot in the hard-hit areas trying to get the word out that we are still here. Project Rebound was put in place very soon after April 27th, and while other agencies have left, we are still here providing services. Our grant will last until the end of June 2012. This job has been so rewarding and a growing experience for all involved. It has not only touched so many survivors’ lives but also our lives. The people we meet are unbelievably strong and have endured so much. It really makes you thankful for the things that you have.

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 __________________________________________

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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 
HOMECOMING RECEPTION 2012

On February 11, 2012, in partnership with the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences, the Social Work Program hosted a homecoming reception. Approximately 25 people attended the reception including Dr. Susan Vaughn ('71), Ms. Joyce Greathouse ('56), Ms. Barbara Bonfield ('58), Ms. Vermey Greene ('46), and Ms. Brandy Tate ('06).