



Student Matters/Students Matter

Australia's first professional doctorate (DSW) degrees were awarded to **Nora Ruzzene** and **David Nilsson**. Both students' theses were supervised by Senior Lecturer **Dr Martin Ryan**. Senior Lecturer **Margarita Frederico** co-supervised Dr Nilsson's thesis.



Dr Nora Ruzzene and Dr David Nilsson.

Lee-Anne Daffy, a fourth year student at Bendigo, has won this year's Molly Dyer Prize awarded by the Darebin Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Council for an outstanding essay written by an indigenous person about indigenous issues. Lee-Anne's essay called on social workers to confront their role in the "Stolen Generation."

Kerry Burns (BSW Hons) was awarded the Albury-Wodonga Camous Medal for 2002.

Kerry and fellow students, Elizabeth Szacsvey and Gillian Sandwith, were awarded the Helen Horton Memorial Prize for 2002.

Cherie Minniecon (BSW, Albury-Wodonga) has been appointed Program Advisor in the Indigenous Initiatives Unit, Department of Human Services, Melbourne.

The School's Honours Program is now in its third year. Students who have recently completed their honours degree include:

Priscilla Camilleri (Bundoora) who wrote a thesis on "Social Work Students' Attitudes Toward Homosexuality and Homosexual parenting as an Alternative Family Unit" supervised by Senior Lecturer **Dr Martin Ryan**

Pamela Irvine (Bundoora) who wrote a thesis on "Support for Families, Parental Mental Illness and Child Protection" supervised by Adjunct Senior Lecturer **Dr Noel Renouf**.

Beth George (Bundoora) who wrote a thesis on "Mature Age Women in Social Work at La Trobe University" supervised by Professor **Allan Borowski**.

Sonia Acosta (Bundoora) who wrote a thesis on "The Needs of Spanish-Speaking Latin-American Women who are Victims of Domestic Violence" supervised by Professor **Allan Borowski**.

Eleni Sita (Bundoora) who wrote a thesis on "Mental Health Social Workers' Attitudes to Cannabis Use by Persons with a Psychiatric Condition" supervised by Associate Professor **Bill Healy** and Adjunct Senior Lecturer **Dr Noel Renouf**.

Julie Semmens who wrote a thesis on "The impacts of postnatal depression on a subsequent pregnancy." Supervised by Lecturer **Dr Jennifer Lehmann**

Damian Killeen (Bendigo) who wrote a thesis on "The Nature of Supports Used By Non-custodial Fathers" supervised by Lecturer, **Dr Jennifer Lehmann**

Geraldene Mackay (Bendigo) who wrote a thesis on "How People Cope with a Large Organization (Centrelink) in a Quasi Market." supervised by Lecturers **Dr Jennifer Lehmann** and **Russell Deal**.

Gretchen Ennis (Bendigo) who wrote a thesis on "Sustaining Participation in Collective Protest Action." Supervised by Lecturer **Di Cox**.

Staff Activities

Child, Youth and Family Welfare Research Group

Research

In May 2003, Berry Street Victoria, in partnership with the Austin Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Mindful (Melbourne University's Centre for Training and Research in Developmental Health) and the School, was funded by the Department of Human Services to establish the new Statewide Intensive Therapeutic Service to be known as Take Two) to provide therapeutic services for children and young people who are clients of the child protection system.. Associate Professor **David Green** and Senior Lecturer, **Margarita Frederico** developed the research design for the evaluation of this new initiative which will be directed by the School. Professor **Allan Borowski** is a Member of the Take Two Management Group.

Fiona Gardner, Senior lecturer and Head of the School's Bendigo campus, and Bob Jamieson of the Psychology Department at La Trobe's Bendigo campus have carried out evaluations of Shared Action, a community-based response to increasing safety for children which is auspiced by St Luke's and has received funding from the Potter Foundation.

Publications

Margarita Frederico & E Duizend. 2002 Youth Futures: An evaluation of the first 2 years of the program. Melbourne: Mission Australia.

Conferences

Dr Judith Gibbs, lecturer at the Albury-Wodonga campus, presented papers based on her PhD research and her work as Chair of the Victorian Child Death Review Committee to

British Association of the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Congress in York, UK, 20 – 23 July 2003.

In June 2003 The School of Social Work and Social Policy together with the Institute Sultan Iskandar Family Development Foundation of Johor and the Asia Pacific Forum on Families jointly sponsored an international conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Facing up to Global Challenges: Building Resilient Families and Caring Communities in a Troubled World. Participants from the School included Adjunct Professor **David Cox**, Lecturer **Robyn Mortlock** of the Albury-Wodonga campus, Associate Professor **Alison McClelland** and Senior Lecturers **Margarita Frederico**, **Lloyd Owen** and **Cliff Picton** of the Bundoora campus.

Allan Borowski and Mimi Aizenstadt. "Judges' Perspectives on the Impacts of the Introduction of Public Defenders on Israel's Juvenile Court." Presented at 54th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Chicago, Illinois, 14 November 2002.



Dr Trish McNamara (Lecturer at the Bundoora campus) recently attended the Third International Seminar on Outcome-Based Evaluation in Child and Family Services which was held at Malosco, Italy, in June. The group which Dr McNamara is working with plans to investigate community-based centres that provide interventions that are both preventative of problems and promotive of positive outcomes for children and adolescents and their families. A qualitative case study design for the project is being developed. Dr. McNamara was appointed to the Board of the newly formed International Association for Outcome-based



Postgraduate Study in Social Work at La Trobe available at Bundoora, Bendigo, and Albury/Wodonga

- Doctor of Philosophy
- Doctor of Social Work
- Master of Social Work by Research or Coursework
- Scholarships available

For further information contact: School of Social Work and Social Policy
Telephone: (61 3) 9479 2570 Email: socialwork.inquiries@latrobe.edu.au

Evaluation and Research on Family and Children's Services. Other members include Professor Tony Maluccio (Graduate School of Social Work, Boston College, USA), Professor Tiziano Vecchiato (Zancan Foundation, Padua, Italy) and Professor James Whittaker, (School of Social Work, University of Washington, Seattle, USA).

Other Activities

Senior Lecturer **Margarita Frederico** (Bundoora) is Vice President Berry St Victoria and Chair, Policy and Practice Committee, a director of Odyssey House Victoria, Executive Member of the AASW (Victoria), and a member of Mackillop Family Services' Policy and Practice Committee

Dr Jennifer Lehmann (Bendigo) is a director of St Luke's Anglicare and Chairperson of St Lukes Anglicare Research Committee.

Disability and Ageing Research Group

Publications

Lloyd Owen, I, Gordon **Margarita Frederico** and Brian Cooper. 2003. Listen to Us: Resilience in Families with a Child with a Disability Melbourne: Department of Human Services.

Dr Chris Bigby. 2002.. "Social roles and informal support networks for women with intellectual disabilities in mid life and beyond." Pp. 1221-136 in P. Noonan Walsh, & T. Heller (eds). Health of Women with Intellectual Disabilities . Oxford: Blackwell Science

Dr Chris Bigby, Elizabeth Ozanne and M.Gordon. 2002. "Facilitating transition: Elements of successful case management practice for older parents of adults with intellectual disability." Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 37, 3/4, 25-44

Conferences

Dr Chris Bigby, **Margarita Frederico** & Brian Cooper. 2003. "Making Progress!"

Still not an individual but part of a smaller group: Outcomes for the adults with intellectual disabilities relocated from Kew Residential Services to the community

1999-2000." Paper presented at the CIDA Conference, Melbourne, Victoria in May.

Dr Chris Bigby. 2002. "Developing a regional strategy plan for aging people with intellectual disability: Issues and outcome." Paper presented at the Inaugural Conference of IASSID Europe, Dublin, Ireland.

Other Activities

Dr John McCormack received a small ARC/Faculty research grant to study the role of social work in aged care. Further, his centenarian study continues and he responded to a number of media queries in January 2003 , as well as conducting radio interviews, re the oldest person in Australia. This is part of his ongoing role as Australia's representative on the International Database on Longevity maintained at Montpellier, France.

Dr Chris Bigby has been invited to be an associate editor of the Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and appointed as vice chair of the Special Interest Group on Aging and Developmental Disabilities of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disability.

Health and Mental Health Research Group

Research

Dr Guin Threlkeld, Senior Lecturer and Head of the School's Albury-Wodonga Unit, has been engaged as a consultant to the Rural Counseling Project being undertaken by the Upper Hume Primary Care Partnership.

Publications

Dr Helen Cleak. 2002. A Model of Social Work Classification in Health Care. Australian Social Work, 55 (1), pp.38-48.



Trish McNamara

Dr Martin Ryan, **Bill Healy** & **Dr Noel Renouf**, 2002. "Watching the Experts: An observational study of expert mental health social workers." Paper presented at the La Trobe University, Faculty of Health Sciences Research Conference on Mental Health: La Trobe Health Sciences' Initiatives, 9 December, La Trobe University, Bundoora.

Dr Martin Ryan. 2002. "Working Together: A Qualitative Study of Collaboration between Social Workers and Nurses at the Royal Children's Hospital." Paper presented at the Social Work Research Forum, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, 27 February..

Master of Social Work in Community Care



ARE YOU THINKING OF FURTHER STUDY?

Are you looking for a postgraduate course that addresses the challenges and problems of the contemporary social worker in the community?

Over the past year the School of Social Work and Social Policy has recast its Master's program to address the reality of practice in community settings. We all know that the traditional and institutional base of social work practice has radically changed. Most social workers now work in settings distinguished by complexity, multiple relationships and constant interface with a range of different policy sectors. Governments, driven by rapid social and economic change, have devolved a wide range of existing and new programs and problems to local and community agencies. These strategies have impacted on all helping professions, particularly social work. And the impact of these changes has also landed on vulnerable families and people, often compounding the issues they face in an increasingly competitive and fragmented world.

The MSW in Community Care addresses the policy, program and practice implications of these changes. Social workers in leadership, management and development roles may be particularly interested in this course which confronts the reality that most practitioners now have to undertake casework with clients with multiple problems and issues, work constructively with numerous other providers, address the relationship of their service to their particular localities, contribute to community building, and often manage the financial and information systems essential to their work. This degree recognises that narrow professional models of practice are no longer relevant or effective. The C21 social worker requires knowledge and skills, which equip her or him for practice in volatile and complex contexts.

For further information see advert opposite



Field Education



Cathy Dowden
Fieldwork Placement Coordinator

The field education program in the School is seen as an integral part of the BSW course and there is substantial investment of staff time and financial resources to provide an integrated curriculum to ensure that students are adequately prepared for the increasingly complex world of social work practice. The number of placements required has increased over the years with increased enrolments. At Bendigo alone 80 placements are required.

The School's Director of Field Education is Senior Lecturer, Dr **Helen Cleak**, who with **Cathy Dowden** at Bundoora, Lecturer **Ian Bedford** and **Claire Keily** at Albury-Wodonga and **Garth Phillips** at Bendigo, have primary carriage of the fieldwork education curriculum.

Placement Opportunities

La Trobe has no student units and suitable field educators are recruited by a system of individual follow up of agencies or supervisors. The Bundoora campus is a foundation member of the Combined Schools Field Education Database Project and receives about half of its almost 200 placement requirements from this process. The rural campuses follow a similar model of individual follow-up and allocation but rely heavily on external supervision because of the lack of available and appropriately qualified social workers in their regions. This situation is beginning to ease somewhat as the School begins to reap the rewards of building the social work profession in the regions as more and more of our past graduates offer to become field educators.

The mainstream fields of practice such as family support, hospitals, community health, mental health, child protection and general welfare services provide about one half of placements. Thus, La Trobe receives a good allocation from the major fields of practice which reflect the research interests of the staff as well as the specialisations that are taught in the course, such as health, mental health and child and family welfare. This and other Schools of Social Work face a particular challenge in placing students in those fields of practice which have suffered workplace changes, budget cuts and the need for staff to reach daily targets of clients seen, factors which made it difficult to allocate supervision time.

Overseas Placements

There are some opportunities for students to undertake placements overseas (particularly in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe) to broaden students' understanding of cross-cultural practice.

There have been 24 overseas placements organized since 1997 with a strong focus on the Asia-Pacific region. With the financial assistance of the Myer Foundation, the School has developed a strong educational link with a United Nations sponsored

organization in Manila, Philippines, where at least two students are placed each year. During the course of the last year, two of the three Bendigo students who did placements overseas were placed in Malmo, Sweden.

New Initiatives

The School's Bundoora campus has developed a strong link with Northern Health in the north-east region of Melbourne. Susan Moore is the new Director of Social Work Services across three sites and is providing a number of student placements in the area of acute health and aged care. We hope to promote research and practice development activities with School staff and practitioners at Northern health collaborating on research, education and training in health and aged care.

The success of the School's field education program is substantially dependent on the invaluable contributions of those committed social work professionals who assume the role of fieldwork educator. The School expresses its sincere thanks, on behalf of its students, to the following social workers who have regularly provided placements to La Trobe social work students in recent years: **Amber Stephens, Coral Lees, David Nayler, Deb Collard, Nicci Rossel, Ray Reiffel, Sr Doris Testa, Steve Martin, and Susan Moore.**



Interested in Being a La Trobe Social Work Field Educator?

La Trobe students are generally on placement between early September and mid-December. If you are interested in offering a social work placement to one of your students, please contact the relevant School campus. Field educators need to be a qualified social worker (AASW eligible) and have two or more years experience after graduation. Each campus offers briefing and debriefing sessions for fields educators prior to and towards the end of the placement period. The Combined Schools of Social Work offer a two-day course every February to train potential Field Educators. Course details for February 2004 will be advertised later in the year.

Bachelor of Social Work Graduate Employment Survey 2003

1. Response Rate: (76 replies :142 graduates) 54%

2. Student Profile:

Age:
median 29 yrs
females 30 yrs
males 26 yrs

Gender:
female 89%
male 11%

3. Employment Characteristics:

On 30th June 2003
in paid employment 90%
full-time 69%
part-time 31%
human services industry 97%

worked under the title
"Social Worker" 20%
"Case Manager" 14%
"Child Protection Worker" 12%
"Youth Worker" 8%

Field of Practice:
children and families 31%
aged (includes all hospital jobs) 23%
youth 17%
homeless 10%

Main type of work undertaken:
social casework 45%
case management 20%
protective work 14%
counselling 5%

Employer:
large non – government 48%
state government 25%
hospital 12%
ongoing position 66%
contract/fixed term 34%

Working Conditions:
high/excessive workload 29%
regular supervision 51%
stress in job 29%
job satisfaction 55%
median salary (all workers) \$37000

Position located:
through newspaper 40%
BSW field contacts 25%
previous employment 19%

Looking for job:
2 weeks or less 62%
6 months or more 3%
applied for 2 or less jobs 64%

rapport (noun) relationship or communication, especially when useful and harmonious

rapporteur (noun) a person responsible for compiling reports and presenting them



From the Head of School

Welcome to the third edition of *Rapporteur*. Like the previous two editions, this one is full of material that reflects the vibrancy of a large professional School whose staff is highly committed to the best possible preparation of its students for beginning-level and advanced social work practice, to practice- and policy-relevant research and scholarship and to community service. Indeed, the reputation enjoyed by the School for excellence in preparation for practice led to considerable lobbying by stakeholders in the Sunraysia region for a BSW to be offered at Mildura. Thus, beginning in 2004, a graduate entry BSW program will be offered at the university's Mildura campus.

The School has a long tradition of reflection and review of its course offerings. Indeed, it invests substantial resources in these activities on an ongoing basis. As foreshadowed in the last edition of this newsletter, some fine-tuning of the BSW degree will be introduced in 2004. The changes include an additional direct practice subject in Year 2, the "retrieval" back into the School of a research subject that was formerly taught by the Department of Sociology, and the introduction of a dedicated subject on social work practice in a diverse society. Later this year the School will begin a review of its fieldwork education program. This is clearly an integral and vital part of undergraduate social work education, one that is highly dependent on our able and devoted adjunct academic staff, in other words, our field education supervisors. Indeed, we devote a large part of this edition of *Rapporteur* to the School's field education program.

The School's Masters degree offerings are also currently being reviewed and the outcomes of that review process will be reported in the next edition of this newsletter.

Other news ... The School was delighted to welcome on board a new lecturer, Dr **Patricia McNamara**, who teaches direct practice and human growth and development at the Bundoora campus. **Cathy Dowden**, who for several years had made a major contribution to field education as a sessional staff member, also joined the Bundoora campus as Field Education Coordinator. And after almost 27 years of service to the School, Bundoora-based Senior Lecturer Dr **Thom Puckett** has retired. Lecturers **Jennifer Lehmann** of the School's Bendigo campus and **Judith Gibbs** of the Albury-Wodonga campus successfully completed their PhD degrees. **Fiona Gardner**, who is the Head of the School's Bendigo campus was promoted to Senior Lecturer as was **Mark Furlong** of the Bundoora campus. And Centenary Medals were awarded to Associate Professor **Alison McClelland** and fourth year Bundoora student, Margaret Moloney. **Jan Pascal** and **Tim Adam** have joined the staff of the School's Bendigo campus on a part-time basis while two other staff, Lecturer **Grace Brown** and Senior Lecturer Dr **Jennifer Lehmann**, are on maternity leave and

sabbatical respectively. And in response to the war in Iraq, a group of Bundoora campus staff and students set up a La Trobe Social Work Peace Group earlier this year. This group's most visible action was marching in the annual Palm Sunday march on April 13 under the group's banner.



Despite the parlous state of Australia's universities, the various items in this newsletter reflect a host of achievements that are testimony to both the calibre and dedication of the School's academic and administrative staff and the quality of the students that the School continues to attract.

Professor Allan Borowski