



RAPPORTEUR



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Newsletter of the School of Social Work and Social Policy – Faculty of Health Sciences

From the Head of School



Alison McClelland
Head of School

This edition of the newsletter highlights the achievements and developments of the School, with a focus on the regional campuses located in Bendigo, Albury–Wodonga and Mildura. So often social work is the quiet achiever of health, social and community services, but together with our partners in industry there are many exciting developments across Victoria to be found. When bringing together the research, teaching and other activities of the School we have a vibrant community of academic and industry pursuits of which we can be justly proud. With continued change in both internal and external environments throughout 2004, the School met a range of challenges that required reappraisal of School structures and teaching activities. The pursuit of high quality programs in the face of financial constraints is an ongoing pressure but this year also heralded the alignment of Social Work at Bendigo with the School and the decision to introduce an ongoing Social Work program in Mildura. Quality assurance mechanisms were also reviewed in line with the Australian Universities Quality Agency audit and the recommendations emerging from a Faculty review of multi-site teaching.

The School, now encompassing four campuses, has 643 students enrolled in the BSW and 54 students enrolled in some form of post-graduate study. In Albury–Wodonga, the final intake of students into the Bachelor of Welfare Practice (BWP) graduated in 2004 and intake into the BSW (4 year) increased with the phasing out of the BWP. Of particular note, were the achievements of Mary Taylor, a student from Albury–Wodonga campus, who was awarded a number of prizes including the Albury–Wodonga Campus Medal, the City of Wodonga Learning City Prize and the Helen Horton Memorial Prize.

Alison McClelland

Comings and Goings

The Head of School position was taken up by Alison McClelland in 2004 after the completion of three year's dedicated service by Allan Borowski. At the regional campuses Dianne Cox commenced in the role of Head of Social Work, Bendigo, and has continued to lead the team in Bendigo following the alignment of the Faculty for Regional Development with Bundoora faculties. Paula Bruce was appointed to a two year position at Mildura and Guin Threlkheld continues to lead developments at Albury–Wodonga. Martin Ryan and Margarita Frederico both received much deserved promotions to Associate Professor.

At Bendigo the staff team farewelled Garth Phillips after many years of dedicated work, particularly in developing the fieldwork curriculum and establishing fieldwork placements for students in Central Victoria. Following in Garth's footsteps are Deb Western and Natasha Long who, together, are taking fieldwork teaching and placements to new heights. Also joining the Bendigo team at the commencement of 2005 was Jan Pascal.

At Bundoora, we said good bye to Cliff Picton, Thom Puckett and Lloyd Owen. Carmel Laragy was appointed, adding to the strength of School's work in disability research led by Chris Bigby. Maureen Long also commenced a two-year contract at Bundoora, in response to additional staff requirements arising from the program at Mildura. In Albury–Wodonga, Judith Gibbs took a year's leave and Annie Venville took up a temporary position, while Ian Bedford was farewelled at the end of 2004.

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The Regions in Focus

Formally operating across four campuses, in addition to its substantial program in Bundoora, the School now has an even more significant role in regional and rural areas reflecting a strong commitment to non-metropolitan communities and greater equity of access to social work education. The span of experience and knowledge of the school's staff will continue to be enriched by the contributions of regional staff who bring a range of industry relationships and potential for partnerships in teaching and research.

In 2006 Social Work will celebrate 15 years of continuous delivery of the BSW at Albury-Wodonga and 10 years at Bendigo while Mildura also continues to provide opportunities to access the BSW. It was in 1989 that La Trobe University first introduced the Social Work (Graduate Entry) Program to Mildura with an intake of 12 students, all of whom graduated. Many of the regional graduates stay within the region and several are now, in turn, teaching in the School. However, regional graduates have also practised overseas including in East Timor, Mongolia, London and Ireland. At the Mildura Campus a new, two-year, once-off BSW commenced in 2004 staffed by Ms Paula Bruce and supported by teaching staff from the other campuses. The Program has received a positive response by both students and the welfare community in Mildura. An ongoing BSW program has also been developed following the University's decision to offer social work on a permanent basis.



Staff of the regional campuses regularly engage in a range of joint research projects and program evaluations with local agencies. This enhances the links between academic teaching, research and contemporary practice. Staff contribute to local debate and Paula Bruce (pictured above) from Mildura has initiated a regular fortnightly breakfast show on Mildura ABC radio where issues of local social interest are raised. Staff also contribute through their industry and community links which are maintained with such organisations as St Lukes Anglicare, Mallee Family Care, the Bendigo HealthCare Group, Upper Hume Community Health, Upper Murray Family Care, the Rural City of Wodonga, Upper Hume Primary Care Partnership, Families and Rural Mobile Childcare Services and the Department for Human Services.

With most of northern Victoria gripped by drought, which may be a realisation of climate change, and significant changes in demographic characteristics, the regional campuses need to provide graduate social workers with a broad range of generic knowledge and skills. As well as the more 'traditional' fields of practice attracting graduates, there are a number of opportunities for social workers in new areas of work. In Mildura La Trobe staff are involved in producing an edited volume to be launched on the 50th anniversary of the 1956 floods in which Mildura and the Darling Murray Basin was flooded for many months.



Following the introduction of a similar model at Albury-Wodonga in 2002, in Bendigo adjustments to the organisation of fieldwork have seen a change that defines two distinct roles – education for fieldwork and placement coordination. These roles have been taken up by Deb Western and Natasha Long (pictured above), respectively, and they plan to further develop the fieldwork program. One of the significant findings in reviewing the 2004 fieldwork program was the need for liaison workers to be well briefed about their roles and responsibilities. A major part of the role sees them forming a link between the University campus staff and the field. This link is one aspect that Deb and Natasha hope to strengthen by inviting field educators, external supervisors and liaison workers to a lunch, information session and talk by Professor Jan Fook in August prior to the beginning of placements.

The School contributes to developing the role of the University within regional communities. In September 2004, the School organised the inaugural Dean of Health Sciences' Lecture at the Albury-Wodonga Campus. David Green delivered the lecture, "The Risk Society: implications for community services and an ethical practice" The occasion drew a record crowd for a public lecture at the Albury-Wodonga Campus, presenting practitioners from the region with a stimulating argument, and triggering a lively debate in the field. A further dimension of staff activity to develop the role of the University in the regions is illustrated in Virginia Mansel Lee's membership of the organising committee of The Albury Wodonga Alliance for Regional Education. AWARE is a union and community initiative drawing together concerned people to work to maintain and enhance the provision of quality tertiary education within the Albury-Wodonga region.



Looking to the Future... A Double Degree for 2006

During 2004 the School examined a number of changes to the Bachelor of Social Work resulting from student feedback, the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) accreditation comments, and the need to respond to the changes in the external environment. As a result in 2006 we will introduce a new four year double degree, the Bachelor of Social Work/Bachelor of Human Services to replace the existing four year Bachelor of Social Work. This is an exciting step to spearhead a new approach to advance graduates' ability to utilise theory in practice and to work effectively in complex organisations.

Expectations of employers are increasing. Graduates now need to be capable, flexible practitioners who are well equipped to work with the heightened complexity of both social need and the organisational environment. The new Bachelor of Social Work/Bachelor of Human Services will prepare students for this by exposing them to the fields of social work practice and human service organisations from first year onwards, and by explicitly requiring students to relate their increased practice exposure to the theoretical underpinnings of the degree.

We are also introducing a three year Bachelor of Human Services for those students unsure as to whether they wish to do social work, but interested in working in human service organisations in administration and other welfare related positions. There will be opportunities to articulate from this degree into a social work degree at various stages.

And at the International Level...



International research activities and conference presentations ensure that knowledge and skills are shared broadly. The School has renewed its formal partnership agreement with Community and Family Services International, an international humanitarian organisation based in the Philippines, for a further five years. The partnership facilitates international social work placements for La Trobe University BSW students in the Philippines and joint research activities. Cliff Picton and Margarita Frederico have been engaged in ongoing research and evaluation with CFSI which includes an evaluation of a post conflict transition project in Mindanao, Philippines.

The School was also invited to develop a postgraduate program by Bandung Indonesia School of Social Work. This Program will draw on academic staff from both La Trobe and Bandung. In addition, the planned program will fund higher degree research students to study at La Trobe University. It is anticipated that joint research endeavours will also be developed from the Bandung and La Trobe partnership. Support for this initiative has come from the Ministry of Social Affairs, Indonesia, to whom a submission for funding has been made. Staff from the School have previously delivered short courses at Bandung by invitation. A joint Bandung/La Trobe School of Social Work and Social Policy paper titled Building a Partnership for an International Social Work Continuing Education and Post Graduate Program: A Case Study has been accepted for presentation at the 18th Asia-Pacific Social Work Conference to held in Seoul Korea in September 2005.

At the Bendigo Campus, Jennifer Lehmann continues to maintain contact with the Dean of the School of Social Work, Prof. Dr. Gaby Franger-Huhle, Fachhochschule Coburg (University of Applied Sciences) in Germany. Prof. Dr. Franger-Huhle is keen to develop a formal relationship with La Trobe and to adapt Jennifer's method of teaching from practice-based narrative to the German context.

The School was also very pleased to receive funding from The Myer Foundation to continue our program of student placements in the Asia/Pacific region 2005-2007.

Visit by Professor Marianne Berry and Professor Mark Ezell

In May this year the School was delighted to host an academic visit by Professors Marianne Berry and Mark Ezell from the School of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas. Professor Berry has a distinguished academic career and high international profile. She is widely published in the child and family welfare domain. Professor Ezell is well known to many as a result of his sabbatical leave spent in Melbourne some years ago. His publications and research interests include juvenile justice, advocacy and welfare administration. During their visit Professors Berry and Ezell presented a well attended Seminar on current child and family welfare issues. Both Professors Berry and Ezell are members of the International Association for Outcome-Based Evaluation and Research in Family and Children's Services. The Melbourne component of the study is being undertaken by Patricia McNamara of the School's Bundoora Campus in partnership with Berry Street Victoria.





Postgraduate Studies in the School

For some years a number of units in the Masters of Social Work Program have been offered, but with the phasing out of these from 2005 onwards the School moves towards an exciting new postgraduate program. The Postgraduate Certificate in Complex Community Care will be offered from second semester 2005 onwards with different units being delivered across the campuses, other than Mildura. These units may be taken as single subjects for continuing education, as subjects contributing to the Postgraduate Certificate in Complex Community Care, or as electives in other post-graduate programs offered by the Faculty. It was launched at Albury-Wodonga campus with Judith Gibbs teaching the unit, Supervision in Community Care. Attracting students from around the state as well as the local region, demand for the unit exceeded the available places. This unit was developed in response to outcomes of consultancy work undertaken by Guin Threlkeld for the Upper Hume primary Care Partnership Rural Counselling Project.

In 2004, four postgraduate research students were successful in achieving postgraduate scholarships of various kinds. These included one Australian Postgraduate Award, the 'Robin Clark Berry Street Victoria Take Two' Scholarship and two Department of Human Services PhD scholarships in disability studies. The teaching staff at regional campuses also continue to pursue postgraduate qualifications with three Bendigo and two Albury-Wodonga staff members currently enrolled in PhD studies.

Also in 2004, Janet Anand completed her PhD, titled: The Grey Zone: an empirical study of paediatric social admission in a Tasmanian hospital. Her thesis explored the hidden phenomenon of paediatric social admission for hospitalised children. Other PhD research includes:

Trauma Pathways into Childhood Abuse – an exploration of the family's experience when children are both victims of abuse and sexually abusive (Robyn Miller)

Responding to young people with multiple and complex needs (John Edwards)

Effective practice with high risk youth (Lloyd Owen).

Gender and social capital (Sue Hodgkin)

Continuing Education in Physiotherapy in Rural Critical Care (Sally Sobels)

An exploration of the experience of ageing for people with long-term physical impairment (Margaret Cooper)

Inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in social policy development (Patsie Frawley).

A study of the Friendships and Relationships Important to Young Adults with Intellectual Disability (Brenda Burgin).

A study of deinstitutionalisation of people with intellectual disability (Brian Cooper).

Students put theory into practice



With the encouragement of their lecturer, Dr Carmel Laragy, a group of 3rd year Social Work students decided that they would turn an assignment for their Communities subject into a real-life event to raise funds for tsunami-affected communities. They decided to hold a Band & DJ night at the Eagle Bar at La Trobe University's Bundoora Campus.

Through the process of organising the event (which became a much bigger project than they had initially expected!) they learnt valuable social work skills that they will be able to apply in an organisational context, such as funding procedures, developing contacts in the community, advertising and teamwork.

All of this paid off on the night, with 250 people turning up to hear the great local bands, enjoy a beer and dance to the DJs tunes. Overall \$1800 was raised, which will be going to the International Federation of Social Work's project, supporting long-term needs of tsunami survivors.



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

- Doctor of Philosophy
- Doctor of Social Work
- Master of Social Work by Research
- Postgraduate Certificate in Complex Community Care

For further information contact: School of Social Work and Social Policy

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| Bendigo | Phone: 03 5444 7411 | Email: socialwork.bendigo@latrobe.edu.au |
| Bundoora | Phone: 03 9479 2570 | Email: socialwork.inquiries@latrobe.edu.au |

Key developments in research

In the area of child, young people and family the main development has been the commencement of research and evaluation associated with the DHS funded Take Two Intensive Therapeutic Program for children and young people who have been abused (Margarita Frederico and Martin Ryan). Other relevant research included the Melbourne component of a cross-national study into Assessing Sensitive Outcomes in Child and Family Centres (Patricia McNamara), an evaluation of Families and Schools Together (FAST) in Shepparton (Margarita Frederico), and an evaluation of Mission Australia's Living in Full Effect (LIFE) program for youth with problems of substance abuse (Margarita Frederico and Sue Jones).

Research in health and mental health included a major consultancy for DHS, the North East Mental Health Services Development Project (Bill Healy, Noel Renouf, Guin Threlkeld, Martin Ryan and David Green). Working in partnership with local consultants Evolving Ways, the group's work included extensive consultation with consumers and providers of mental health services across the north east of the state. Bill, Noel and Martin also undertook a consultancy on the factors impacting on people's capacity to maintain long-term tenancies. We were pleased to have Robert Bland from Tasmania as a visitor to the university to continue his collaborative work with members of the mental health research team, especially Noel Renouf. Guin Threlkeld completed a consultancy about Access and Response to Counselling Services in North East Victoria.

Chris Bigby with Kelley Johnson from RMIT won a major DHS tender to evaluate the closure of Kew Residential Services. Chris was also a team member of two successful ARC linkage projects. The first will examine the history of Kew Residential Services and the second will examine experiences of ageing from the perspective of people with an intellectual disability. She has also continued involvement in a number of other disability related research projects including; a five year follow up study of residents relocated in 1999 from Kew Residential Services with Margarita Frederico and Brian Cooper; an evaluation of the third and fourth year of operation of the Villa Maria Ageing with a Disability Service, funded by DHS and in collaboration with Elizabeth Ozanne from Melbourne University; and an evaluation of the independent review of a major life decision affecting people with an intellectual disability conducted in collaboration with the President of the Intellectual Disability Panel. Carmel Laragy was also engaged in disability related research into Individualised Lifestyles Project Evaluation.

John McCormack continued his role as Australia's representative on the International Database on Longevity located at Mont Pellier France. This work is part of the ongoing Australian Centenarian study conducted by John. He is also part of a collaborative team including members from La Trobe University Faculty of Health Science and the Faculty of Human Development at Victoria University, which is researching Quality of Life status of people aged ninety years or more.



Research Grants

Bigby, C., Johnson, K.

Making life good in the community: an evaluation of the closure of Kew residential services. Funded by DHS.
2004 – 2007 (\$497,000)

Broome, R., Bigby, C., Holmes, K., Monk, L.,

A Great and Crying Need: A History of Kew Residential Services, 1887-2007, through Innovative Textual, Oral, Aural and Experiential Media. ARC Linkage Grant.
2004 – 2007 (\$331,699)

Buys, L., Knox, Bigby, C. Boulton-Lewis, G., Edwards, H.

Developing an Integrative Active Ageing Model for Policy Makers and Service Providers to Support Older People with Lifelong Intellectual Disability. ARC Linkage grant.
2005 – 2007 (\$130,000)

Cleak, H. & Picton, C.

Australian Social Work Student Outreach to the Asian-Pacific Region: A Partnership, Myer Foundation.
2005 – 2007 (\$60,000)

Frederico, M., Bamlett, M. & Jackson, A.

To explore emotional wellbeing & assessment approaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. ARC Research Grant.
2005 – 2006 (\$42,656)

Frederico, M., Ryan, M, Thomas, S & Jackson, A.

Take Two, an Intensive therapeutic program for children and young people traumatised by abuse, Department of Human Services, A consortium between La Trobe University, Berry Street Victoria and Austin CAMHS.
2003 – 2007 (\$205,750)

Frederico, M., Long, M & Jones, S.

Evaluation of the Young Parents Program. Orana Family Services.
2005 – 2006 (\$20,625)

Laragy, C., & Bigby, C.

Individualised funding in disability services; does it promote self-determination and offer new opportunities or does it compound difficulties.
Faculty Start Grant (\$5,000)

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Staff

Bundoora Campus

Ms Alison McClelland - Associate Professor and Head of School
Dr Allan Borowski - Professor
Dr David Cox - Adjunct Professor
Ms Margarita Frederico - Associate Professor
Mr Bill Healy - Associate Professor
Dr Martin Ryan - Associate Professor
Dr Chris Bigby - Senior Lecturer
Dr Helen Cleak - Senior Lecturer
Mr Mark Furlong - Senior Lecturer
Dr Noel Renouf - Adjunct Senior Lecturer
Mr David Green - Lecturer
Dr Carmel Laragy - Lecturer
Ms Maureen Long - Lecturer
Dr John McCormack - Lecturer
Dr Trish McNamara - Lecturer
Ms Cathy Dowden - Student Placement Coordinator
Mr Neil McDonald - Administration Manager
Ms Jean Power - Student Administrative Officer
Ms Sally Collins - Administrative Officer
Ms Margaret Green - Administrative Officer

Albury – Wodonga Campus

Dr Guin Threlkeld - Senior Lecturer and School Head of Campus
Dr Judith Gibbs - Lecturer (On Leave)
Ms Sue Hodgkin - Lecturer
Ms Virginia Mansel Lees - Lecturer
Ms Robyn Mortlock - Lecturer
Mr David Roberts - Adjunct Lecturer
Ms Anne Venville - Student Placement Coordinator
Ms Alice Glachan - Administrative Officer

Bendigo Campus

Ms Fiona Gardner - Senior Lecturer (On Leave)
Ms Dianne Cox - Lecturer and School Head of Campus
Ms Grace Brown - Lecturer
Dr Jennifer Lehmann - Lecturer
Ms Jan Pascal - Lecturer
Ms Deb Western - Lecturer
Ms Natasha Long - Student Placement Coordinator
Ms Kathryn Barton - Administrative Officer

Mildura Campus

Ms Paula Bruce - Lecturer

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

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

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