

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Newsletter from Baylor University School of Social Work • Volume No. 20 • January 2008

## No more role playing; this is the real thing.

On the face of it, the class seemed destined to be uncomfortable for all. The 17 participants were parents mandated to attend. The 26 instructors were MSW family concentration students who were meeting a class requirement.

"I was a little bit panicked about working with mandated students," said Leslie Whitlock, MSW student. "They had already been 'judged,' so I expected they wouldn't be enthusiastic about this. We came into the class first thing with barriers."

Most of the parents who attended the nine-week parenting class were required to do so by Child Protective Services. The class is offered through the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of the Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children in Waco and is facilitated by the Rev. Kerry Burkley, CAC program director.

"These non-offending (i.e., no law has been broken) parents are required as a part of their service plan to take parenting classes in symphony with other services they must



*Some of the MSW students who taught sessions of the parenting class at the Advocacy Center for Children in Waco include (from left) Martha Stice, Jackie Butler, Ashley Thomas, Meredith Casares (seated) and Lillian Lippincott, meeting with Preston Dyer (center).*

complete," Burkley said. "Because they are referred, I report on their status to the case worker and may suggest further services."

The parenting class was divided into two evening sessions and used "The Middle Way" curriculum, developed by the former Parents Anonymous group of Austin, Texas. Burkley provided a two-day training workshop on the curriculum

with the MSW students, who then taught single sessions in teams of two.

"This group of students was exceptionally professional," said Burkley, who has used the curriculum for about seven years. "They came in and it was great. It was like an extension of what I would do in teaching the class."

Preston Dyer, social work professor, and Bethie

Timmons, adjunct professor, have taught the Advanced Social Work Practice: Families and Children class for six years, adding this parenting class assignment four years ago.

Burkley gave parents a pre- and post-class survey to assess percentage of change in frequency of practicing nine parenting skills. All categories increased, but the largest increases came in the  
*(continued on page 4)*

# FROM THE DEAN

## Exceptional students making a difference in and beyond Texas

By Diana R. Garland, Dean of Baylor School of Social Work

You are reading my words in the coldest days of 2008, I suspect, but I am writing them in the waning days of the old year, amidst the crush of the end-of-the-semester grading and the excitement of December graduation and the holidays before us.

On top of that usual activity, our halls have been filled with construction workers renovating the space formerly occupied by the Office of Access and Learning Accommodation. Construction began shortly after Thanksgiving and should be finished by the first of the year.

We're getting seven new office spaces, a larger computer lab for graduate students, two video labs where our students can tape themselves conducting mock and real interviews, a conference room and an attractive new entryway. We're excited, although it has been challenging as we continue to operate with the pounding of nail guns and the whirring of paint mixers all around us! This new space will bring all the staff and faculty together in one area at least temporarily, while we continue to plan and seek the resources we need for a permanent home.

It is always a race to finish all the grading before the December graduation, even without all the distractions. For those of you who haven't been in graduate school for the past few years, we now do much of our grading electronically. Students e-mail their papers, and we use the "tracks" feature of our software to write edits and comments and questions on their papers. I still prefer the feel of paper and a red pen in my hands, but the



*During the School's renovation, faculty and staff met in buildings around campus and some offices relocated temporarily. Here Marilyn Gusukuma (left) phones in to verify a meeting location.*

fact is, I can give more thorough comments at the keyboard. Also, sending papers electronically means students can easily share their work with one another – not just the professor – without sacrificing a stand of trees to do so.

In the middle of all this grading and e-mailing papers, I heard from one of our students who is preparing a "rationale package" for her family members. She says, "This Christmas, instead of iPods or other 'stuff,' I

"rationale package" is her attempt to explain to her family why she is getting a degree in social work, and how important her academic preparation is for the work she feels called to do with immigrant and refugee populations around the world. Her calling may take her far from home, and she knows it may lead to suffering and struggle, and that is what she hopes to explain to her family. She wants to be ready for wherever she feels led to serve.

***She wants more than anything else to rub shoulders with and learn from Christians who have been called to social work as she has been.***

am asking for money so that I can go to the conference in February of the North American Association of Christians in Social Work." She wants more than anything else to rub shoulders with and learn from Christians who have been called to social work as she has been. The

If that student needs any reinforcement when she explains her Christmas wish list to her family, she might get some pointers from Shamethia Webb, who graduated with her BSW in December. Shamethia shares her personal mission statement beginning on page 8. She chose social work as her path before she even knew what it was called; she experienced the need and she needed to do something about it.

In the midst of the grading, I am also buying airplane tickets to fly to the D.C. area in late January to visit



our five students who are in spring field placements in D.C. and Virginia. Two students, Courtney Chapman and Sarah Bush, will be working with Fredericksburg Baptist Church in Virginia. Among their responsibilities is helping to resettle more than 100 refugees from Africa who have come to the USA for asylum and find themselves strangers in a strange place (see a story on this ministry in the fall issue of *Family and Community Ministries Journal*). Lance Summey will be working with Bread for the World, tackling issues of world hunger. Joel Harder will be working with the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and Jennifer Smyer will be working with the Salvation Army, tackling the horrific problem of human sex trafficking.

Closer to home, another group of MSW students in their concentration year taught a group of Waco parents parenting skills through the Children's Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children (*see story on page 1*).

My days are filled with this kind of evidence that we really do have the most incredible group of students I have ever taught, and I've taught some incredible students in my 28 years in the classroom.

In this dark winter, know that there is hope glowing and shining forth in the lives of these passionate students. They want to help strangers find home, provide food security for all God's children, affirm the dignity and worth of every person, and well, they want to change the world. I can think of no better way to live out the message of Christmas. **SSW**

## CALLING ALL ALUMNI

*Let us hear from you!*

Please complete the information below and provide a photo, if possible. (Photos cannot be returned.) Mail to: Krista Barrett, managing editor, School of Social Work, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97320, Waco, TX 76798-7320.

Or send via e-mail to [Krista\\_Barrett@baylor.edu](mailto:Krista_Barrett@baylor.edu) or fax this form to (254) 710-6455.

Name (at graduation and now) \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation/Degree \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Baylor or Carver School graduate? \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Title or Position/Updates (career, family, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**JAN 25** Board of Advocates Meeting

**FEB 7-10** NACSW Convention  
Orlando, FL

**APR 24** SSW Family Dinner  
**25** Board of Advocates Meeting

**MAY 7** MSW Practice Colloquium  
**16** Spring Convocation  
**17** Spring Commencement



## GOODIE PLATES

*Faculty and staff baked lots of Christmas goodies and prepared 65 plates to deliver to offices on campus that are invaluable to the School's work throughout the year. Above (from left) are Dennis Myers, Kay Boatman and Tammy Woods, with Jon Singletary in back. Angela Fields (left) gets wrapped up in her assignment.*



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# REAL THING

(continued from page 1)

following areas:

- “I use ‘time-outs’ with my children” (none before the class, a 34 percent increase)
- “I make time for self care” (30 percent increase)
- “I use alternatives to physical punishment” (28.25 percent increase)
- “I understand my children’s developmental needs and give appropriate tasks to their age” (27 percent increase)

It was this last statistic that caught Burkley’s attention. “Parents who have both older and younger children usually apply the standards of the older child to the younger,” he said, “so this number really jumps out at me.”

Burkley said he considers the classes to be family enrichment and that parents are not told they must parent in a specific way. “We want to give parents freedom to choose other options, other approaches,” he said.

Dyer said he was pleased with the MSW students’ experience and what they learned. “It looks to me as though our students were quite effective in carrying out this assignment, as

well as learning about parenting, group facilitation and working with mandated clients.”

Whitlock, who graduates in May, agreed. “It hit so many good points of teaching. It really taught me about judging people before I’d ever met them,” she said. “What I learned is that these parents really love their children and want what’s best for them. They’re everyday people struggling just like I do but in different areas.”

Martha

Stice, who also graduates in May, taught the first session of the class and said her biggest concern was if the parents would accept her given that she was not a parent.

“I was completely floored by the response. They totally accepted the fact that I wasn’t a parent, and they were responding and asking a lot of questions,” Stice said. “By the end of my session, they were all saying ‘We really need this,’ and I walked out of the class wishing I could go back every week.”

Whitlock and fellow student Jennifer Maness conducted the last class of the series, which did not have a curriculum outline but focused on

processing the entire class experience.

“We asked them to share their ideas with one another, so we facilitated and held to the focus as they brainstormed together,” she said. What she saw was individuals beginning to believe they did have something worthwhile to share and that others were listening to them.

“We ended by encouraging them to celebrate themselves. We asked

*“We ended by encouraging them to celebrate themselves.”*

– Leslie Whitlock, MSW student

each parent to write down some of their strengths and to take that with them.”

Erin O’Brien went to a couple of sessions prior to the one she co-taught and then went to the remainder of the sessions and to the graduation ceremony.

“I just wanted to know the class dynamics and build a rapport,” she said. “I was just so encouraged by the parents. This group was becoming a support for one another. It was like all of us were forming an alliance to work together as partners.”

Burkley, who also is pastor of Greater Ebenezer Baptist Church, said this kind of commitment speaks to the compassion of these students from Baylor.

“They’re tuned in to the needs of people and committed to walk through the experience with them,” he said. “These are not just people to practice their theory on.”

Toward the end of the parenting class, parents brought pictures of their children to share, which O’Brien said was a powerful moment for her.

“They were so excited to bring their pictures and show off their children. That was a real connection for all of us.” **SSW**

– Vicki M. Kabat

## Dyer retirement dinner April 11

Friends, family, current and former students and University colleagues will gather in Waco April 11 for a celebration dinner hosted by the School of Social Work to honor longtime faculty member Preston Dyer.

Dr. Dyer has announced his retirement, effective summer 2008, after 38 years on the Baylor faculty. He developed Baylor’s undergraduate social work program and directed the program for 30 years. In 1998, when the new School of Social Work was established, he was appointed founding chair. In 2001, he left the chair position in order to teach full-time.

For more information about the April 11 celebration, contact Jeanie Fitzpatrick, 254-710-1199, or [Jeanie\\_Fitzpatrick@baylor.edu](mailto:Jeanie_Fitzpatrick@baylor.edu).



# A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

*Sixty-five people gathered in Louisville, KY, Oct. 1 for the reunion of alumni of the WMU Training School, Carver School of Missions and Social Work and Carver School of Church Social Work. The event celebrated 100 years of social work education for the church, a heritage now carried forth by Baylor School of Social Work. At right is House Beautiful, an integral part of the WMU Training School and now the Metro United Way. Three alumnae over 95 years of age spoke at the reunion.*



*Dr. Norma Baker Gabbart (above left) and Myrtice Owens (center) join a friend over scrapbooks. Dr. Baker and June (Mrs. Ray) Honeycutt (below) take a moment to reconnect.*



*At left, Evelyn (Mrs. Frank) Stagg (left) and Diana Garland shared stories. Rosanna Thompson (above) was the featured musician at the celebration.*

# FAITHFUL ANGELS

By Dennis Myers, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

*And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.  
— Luke 17:22 (King James)*

Is social work in the 21st century abandoning its mission to those most vulnerable and left-behind in our communities? For Harry Specht and Mark Courtney (1994) the answer is yes, and they explain why in their book, *Unfaithful Angels: How Social Work Has Abandoned Its Mission*. They warn about a profession ready to reject its 19th-century roots in community change and social justice. Unfaithful angels enamored with professionalism and individualistic interventions, they claim, herald the death of the social mission of our profession.

Is this dire prediction alive in the vocational narratives of our graduate students?

**CARMEN BRANSCUM**, a concentration year student, reveals the heartbeat of many of her colleagues: "I am called to serve the most marginalized populations in the United States and in the world through advocacy for social justice in every aspect of our society. I am called by the love of Christ to emanate that same love, specifically in working with immigrant and refugee populations around the world. I feel that in doing so I am staying true to the original value orientation of the social work profession, even if it means that I, too, suffer with 'the least of these.' For it is in this suffering that I find solidarity with those whom society would deem 'unworthy,' and it is in this suffering that I find joy in the work that I do."



Carmen's calling doesn't sound like the announcement of an unfaithful angel. It does sound like the voice of a new band of angels proclaiming passion for the poor, the sick, the abused, the enemy, the vulnerable and against the societal dynamics that make these conditions possible.



**KELLY BAKER**, an advanced practice student in the children and families concentration, says it this way: "Social work is people. Social justice is people. The combination of the two only makes sense, and my social work education thus far serves as a firm foundation for

me to effectively work with my first love: people."

Political activist Jim Wallis, founder of Sojourners, calls such faithful angels the new evangelicals, a new generation that would not think of separating personal faith from social justice and care for those on the margin, reflecting the spirit of 19th-century social work reformers.

Catherine and William Booth, radical evangelicals, observed that we cannot keep picking up the bodies at the bottom of the mountain without climbing up the mountain to find out who is pushing them off of the edge. More and more of our students want to go to the top of the mountain and deal with the systemic forces that create havoc for humankind.

**LANCE SUMMEY**, an advanced practice student in the physical and mental health concentration, provides this perspective: "We as professionals would be remiss if we were also not assessing both public policy and human service organization structures in their ability to enhance or inhibit the success of our clients."



The voices of our student angels are prophetic for the School of Social Work faculty as we examine our curriculum and teaching. Whatever the focus of the intervention – individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities – we seek to respond to the request, "Walk alongside me as I prepare to care with the sick, the frail elder, the victim of sex trafficking, the outcast." Our curriculum must be formative and responsive to the missional social work student in our midst.

Beginning academic year 2008-2009, we will be offering enriched content in the area of advanced community and organizational practice while deepening learning in advanced practice with individuals, families and groups.



**COURTNEY CHAPMAN**, advanced practice student in the physical and mental health concentration, says: "I want to be a part of creating a world where kids don't go to bed hungry, where HIV/AIDS is not a killer, where all people, no matter what their skin color, religion or socioeconomic status, live



together and care for each other.”

Angels seem to show up at just the right times and usually have something prophetic to say. We faculty, administrators, staff, alumni and friends of the School join with our new host of faithful angels to co-create learning that encourages and invigorates their powerful vision and deep hunger for change.

As we equip them with strength and skill for their calling, we find ourselves also compelled to participate more fully in the transforming mission of social work. **SSW**

<sup>1</sup>Specht, H. & Courtney, M.E. (1994). *Unfaithful Angels: How social work has abandoned its mission*. New York: The Free Press.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Jim Wallis; “The New Evangelical Leaders,” Speaking of Faith with Krista Tippett. National Public Radio, Dec. 2, 2007.

## ALUMNI NEWS

### Nicole (Hoxworth) McAninch

(BSW 2004/MSW 2006) entered the Family Studies PhD program at Texas Woman’s University in fall 2006, and this past spring she passed the first-year qualifying exams. She also passed the licensure exam and is now an LMSW. She is working as a career adviser of career services at Baylor’s Paul L. Foster Success Center. Nicole\_McAninch@baylor.edu

### Matthew Schobert (MSW 2002)

recently made the following presentations: panel chair, “Social Workers Influencing Government,” National Association of Social Workers, Texas Chapter, Annual State Conference, San Antonio, TX (Oct. 19); presenter, “Psychiatric Social Work: A Synergistic Partnership & Practice with the Seriously Mentally Ill and Their Families,” Mental Health Nursing Internship, Central Texas Veterans Health Care System, Waco, TX (Sept. 27).

# HERE SHE IS ...

## BSW senior loves people, seeks justice

By Sarah Bush, MSW student

Spend just a few moments with Flor Avellaneda, and you’ll find yourself smiling. You can’t help yourself because the BSW senior student absolutely glows with joy, enthusiasm, energy and good will. Not to mention she has a smile as expansive as a Big Bend horizon.

“Her charming personality lifts broken spirits. It is nearly impossible to interact with Flor and not share a smile or experience her gift of laughter,” says Jerrod Clark, her supervisor at Mission Waco this semester. “All of her efforts for social justice and her love for people are an act of worship and ‘a sweet aroma unto God.’ She is one flower of God’s bouquet – a unique and special wonder.”

Her “calling to social work” and the impact of faith in her life have played an integral part in her decision to pursue an education at Baylor.

“I just really wanted a career that would be a way for me to glorify God,” she says. “I have so many different passions that it is really hard for me to narrow it down just yet, but wherever God needs me, that is where I will be.”

Those different passions include involvement in NASW Baylor, Phi Alpha Honors Society, Latin Dance Society and the Hispanic Student Association. Plus, this fall she was named Miss Phi Iota Alpha, Miss Congeniality and received the fraternity’s \$2,400 academic scholarship.

“The pageant focuses on character and really allowed us, as participants, to express ourselves,” she says.

As the undergraduate coordinator for NASW Baylor this year, Avellaneda has planned several



*Flor Avellaneda presenting before undergraduate students interested in a social work major.*

events, one of which was the “Journey of Hope” this past October on Baylor’s campus. NASW Baylor facilitated the event sponsored by Amnesty International to advocate for alternatives to the death penalty.

“It was a time of awareness for the Baylor and Waco communities,” Avellaneda says. “Touching stories were shared, and I feel it was a moving experience for all who participated.”

For Avellaneda, who also works a part-time job at a local eatery, her future in social work will likely include advocacy and practice in multigenerational settings. At her Mission Waco internship this fall, she worked closely with services offered through the Meyer Center for the homeless and with children in the after-school program. As a bilingual student with training in gerontology, she is “an invaluable asset to our community that is in desperate need of bilingual social workers,” says Clark, her Mission Waco supervisor.

*(continued on page 11)*

# LIFE-CHANGING WORDS: THE LANGUAGE OF SOCIAL WORK

By Gaynor Yancey, Associate Dean for Baccalaureate Studies



**T**he BSW Senior Capstone course is one of the last courses taken in the baccalaureate academic plan in social work. As a part of the capstone course and the professional portfolio development, students are required to write a personal mission statement. Below is the story (shared with permission) of Shamethia Webb, who graduated from the BSW program and Baylor in December 2007. Shamethia reveals her deep love and commitment for social work.

**October 4, 1984:** My birthday. Some random prickling sensation urged my mother to step off of the sidewalk and into the grass. She did and I was born – a month early. What was I in such a hurry to see?

In subsequent years, I would wish that I could crawl back into my mother's womb and escape the atrocities I saw. Poverty abounded in our public housing unit. Violence permeated our lives and cast a destructive pall over my siblings, parents, cousins and other relatives. I asked myself: "Why were you in such a hurry to see this? You should have stayed in the womb and clung to that warm, safe haven as long as possible."

At that age I did not understand that there was purpose in the pain, that by witnessing distress and experiencing it firsthand I could recognize it more easily in other people. I could empathize with their pain and, perhaps, I could alleviate it.

## **Conflict resolution**

I was a peer mediator in elementary school. My teachers assigned me the task of resolving disputes between my classmates. Armed with a mediation form, a No. 2 pencil, and a do-gooder smile, I embraced my role as a third grade arbitrator. I loved it. I was being introduced to the idea that there was a process for resolving conflict – that one did not have to allow confusion and dysfunction and calamity to dictate, but could instead combat, quell

and mediate it. What an important lesson to learn in school.

Seven years later I stared into the face of a Mission Waco after-school mentor as he encouraged us to be servant leaders and give of ourselves to our community. I rolled my eyes and laughed. Why would we give to a community that had taken from us? And what did we have to give in the first place? Certainly not money. And money is what made the world go round, right? How dare he ask us for service! Who had ever served or saved us?

I was irrationally angry and disaffected by his plea. Gone was the third grade peer mediator who only wanted to resolve and empower. She had witnessed a lot in subsequent years; too many problems for her to process and too little help for her to depend on. She had seen her peer mediation fail in the face of bigger problems at home, and she no longer wanted to serve, she just wanted to survive.

## **No hope at all**

Mr. Mentor would not relent, though. He took an entire troop of us discontented youth to inner-city Houston. We served food at a homeless shelter, played games with abused children and watched with disbelief as runaway youth roamed the city streets prostituting themselves and scrounging for food. These people had less than we had – they had lost hope.

I stood behind a box of canned goods at a relief agency called Casa Maria and handed single cans of corn to poverty-stricken women who had malnourished babies clinging to their breasts. I tried to communicate my sympathy at their plight in broken Spanish. They just said *gracias* and shuffled away to the next box of food.

That was the moment when I told myself, "This is what you have to do with your life. I don't know what it



is or what it's called, but you have to do this." Years later I discovered that "this" was called social work.

### ***Impassioned pleas***

I have always believed that society, and the world at large, can be motivated to action by a powerful speech, an impassioned plea. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and called for equality. He literally changed the South, and much of the United States, through oratory. Jesus said the simple words "Come, follow me," and people did.

I have always been amazed by the power of words to inspire change and harmony or to inflict pain and promote persecution. Adolf Hitler used words to propagandize and exterminate. Malcolm X used words to fuel and impassion. Dr. King used words to inspire and inspire. I appreciate words because I have witnessed how valuable they are to people and to change.

### ***Impacting social work***

What has this to do with social work? Social change happens because of communication – through words that can encourage a group of people or an entire nation to work toward a common goal, whether that goal is the acquisition of civil rights or the extermination of an ethnic group. The foundation of social work lies in its strengths perspective and that relies on words to empower clients: "You are...", "You can..." Words that encourage and embolden, that reassure and inspire.

To me, social work is communicating to a disenfranchised, oppressed or marginalized client or group of people that there is a capacity for change (micro). It is communicating to policymakers that the people they are supposed to represent are disenfranchised,

oppressed or marginalized and they need an agent for change (macro). It is all communication and words and using those words to imbue a sense of urgency or necessity – to demand change and justice.

Let me illustrate how powerful words are: Two words cement romantic partners together for life ("I do"); a few words can change a criminal suspect's life indefinitely ("guilty/not guilty"); a handful of words can impact how a client sees him/herself or life situation ("You can..." / "You are..."). Truly the change process depends on words.

Social workers then should be wordsmiths, not necessarily concerned with the words that fill a text, but with those that can instill a sense of hope in a client or make a demand of work to client.

I emphasize words so much because I have benefited from them so many times myself. Some of the

most important words I heard came from my Baylor mentor eight years ago who said to me, "You know you should really try social work."

Life is changed through communication – verbal and nonverbal – and the interpretation of that communication as well. I have discovered during my internship and service learning experiences that the clients communicate in a distinct language that is sometimes in symbolic forms and sometimes in more literal forms.

A young boy runs into my office and shouts "I'm hungry! Feed me!" On the way home from work I pass a homeless man with a sign that reads: "Hungry. Help me!" I eat lunch at a local restaurant and notice a young woman eyeing my food with eyes that say "I'm hungry. Share with me!"

It is all language, and I cannot respond to that language if I cannot recognize it and, in turn, communicate hope and possibility for change. **SSW**



## **DEVELOPING COMMUNITY**

Several School of Social Work students and alumni met in St. Louis this fall for the annual meeting of the Christian Community Development Association. Back row, from left, are Jerrod Clark, Walker Moore, Heather Deal, Hugh Ellis, Matt O'Brien, Courtney Drew, Cini Bretzlaff, Angela Dennison (Center for Family and Community Ministry staff) and Jason Pittman. In front, from left, are Christy Craddock and Mallory Homeyer.

# THE GREATEST NEED

*Teel gives decades of his life to humanitarian aid and health services*

*By Sarah Bush, MSW student*

It was watching a Bangladeshi child die in his wife's arms that compelled J. Howard Teel, social worker and missionary, to devote more than 30 years to humanitarian aid and health services – especially those that benefit children.

Teel's doctoral dissertation for the University of Louisville addressed issues of poverty, overpopulation, economics and education in Bangladesh. He says he was horrified at the rampant malnutrition and mortality in children he had witnessed during his work in that country before returning to the states for additional education.

"The image of a Bangladeshi child dying in my wife's arms and absolutely nothing we could do, was burned into my memory," he says. "If that child had been born in America, she would have been saved."

During his missionary work in Bangladesh, he helped establish 16 maternal and child health-family practice clinics, a rural hospital for 12 tuberculosis-primary health care clinics and a leprosy hospital with 13 clinics. Nevertheless, in less than 30 years, the population of Bangladesh has doubled, causing increased strain on resources and welfare provisions.

"It is hard to face such a reality, especially when I saw it coming," said Teel, a 1971 graduate of the Carver School of Social Work. "I had performed data analysis to project population growth and nutrition levels during my work on my dissertation. I saw it coming and just kept asking myself, how do I wrestle with these types of problems?"

Teel, 77, began his work overseas in 1963 in East Pakistan where he



*A plaque of appreciation is presented to Dr. Howard Teel by the Federal Ministry of Health in Nigeria in 1991. Teel was country representative for Africare/Nigeria, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C.*

served with the Southern Baptist Convention and Foreign Mission Board as a social worker and missionary. Teel and his wife, Maxine, and their five children have served in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Haiti, Nigeria, Kuwait and various areas of the United States.

"I've always been interested in languages, migration and how people relate to one another, so I decided what parts of the world I wanted to see and applied to jobs there."

Social work, though, wasn't his first choice. He wanted to be an agricultural missionary and began studies at Auburn University in Alabama. He later transferred to Samford, where he earned a dual degree in sociology/psychology and biology in 1954.

"I started out studying cows, but somewhere along my studies, I switched to people. It is complicated work. After 50 years, I have wondered

whether it would have been easier to stick with just studying cows," he laughs.

It was while he was in Pakistan that Teel met Walter Delamarter, professor and director/coordinator at the Carver School of Social Work, who was in the country to visit with social workers in missions. It was a pivotal meeting for Teel, who would decide to return to the States and pursue his master's in religious education with a specialization in social work at Carver.

"My Carver School study and degree reconciled my theology and passion for social concerns, Christian ethics, missions and ministry," Teel says. "It enhanced my ability to



*Dr. J. Howard Teel*



help others help themselves, and at the same time demonstrate God's love, compassion and teachings."

He reiterated that reconciliation of the two fields in an article titled "Concern for the Whole Man" published in 1970 in *The Commission*, in which he shared reflections about his ministry in Pakistan:

"The greatest need is for more missionaries trained in church social work. ... The very fact that God became man in the person of Jesus Christ indicates an ultimate interest in the people he created," he wrote. "Closely linked with the Christian's duty to God is his duty to others. The Christian approach to social work springs directly from the relationship of God and man."

Teel has returned to Louisville, KY, where he attended Carver, and remains active in ministry.

"I try to stay up to date with ways that I can jump in and help," he says. "Our church, Highland Baptist Church, is sponsoring a large family from the refugee camps in Thailand, and they all need winter clothes, so I've been working on that. I was also invited to visit Thailand this February for evaluation of health conditions in four refugee camps with Burmese refugees."

He remains a strong advocate for Carver's tradition, now carried on by Baylor School of Social Work, of training social workers within a Christian context. It was his Carver degree, he says, that helped him to get accepted in the interdisciplinary doctoral program in international health and social services at the University of Louisville.

"When you touch the needs and hearts and minds and souls of people, you've been successful, that's what it's all about – the people." **SSW**

## AVELLANEDA

*continued from page 7*

Born in Altamirano, Guerrero, Mexico, Avellaneda lived in Mexico, Florida and California "off and on" as a young child, but moved to Texas in 1994. Her parents handled all the immigration papers needed at that time, but as she learns more about the process required today, she is empathetic with families caught in this situation.

She has worked with the Ruth Project in Waco to promote financial literacy among immigrant families and with other similar organizations to advance equal services such as Amnesty International and the local Community Race Relations Coalition.

"I am beginning to learn about the immigration process myself now, and it's frustrating," she states. "I cannot imagine how others feel who are actually going through the process."

Avellaneda is preparing for a "lifetime career in social work," as she says, and that passion is obvious to others.

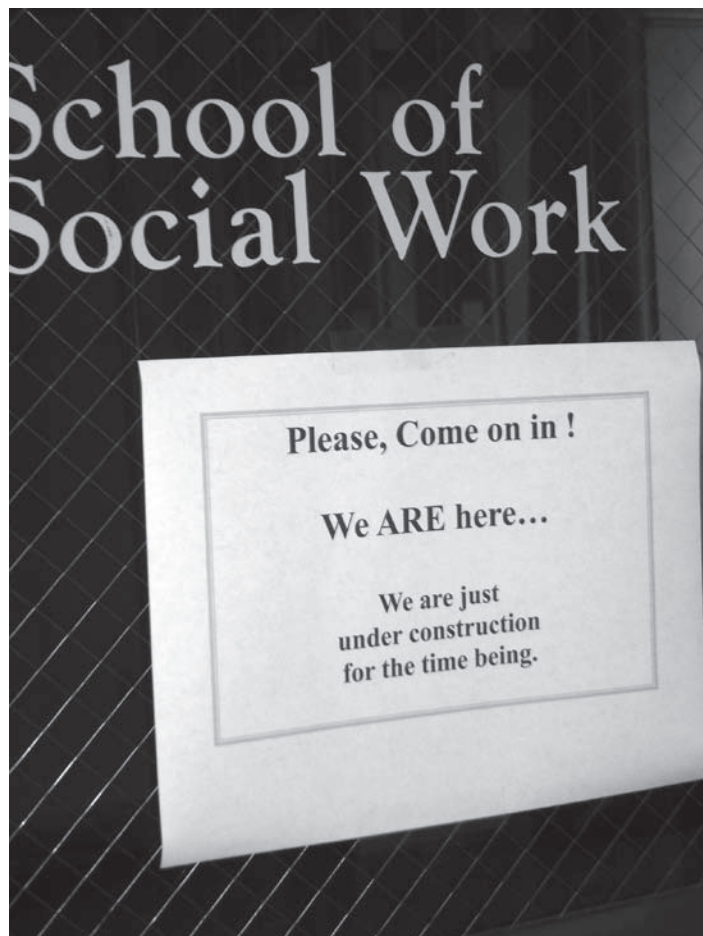
"She has become exuberant in her zest for life," says Gaynor Yancey, associate dean of baccalaureate studies. "If anyone has two minutes to spend with Flor, she will tell you consistently, with such enthusiasm, how much she loves social work. You will have no doubt about that – especially when you see the big smile on her face!" **SSW**



## DYER ETHICS WORKSHOP

*The School of Social Work hosted its annual Preston M. Dyer Workshop Nov. 12 at the Mayborn Museum Theater. William Hopkins (above, right) attorney from Austin, presented a three-hour session on "Legal Aspects of Social Work: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You" to the more than 130 social work practitioners, students and faculty who attended. Pictured with Hopkins above are (from left) Erma Ballenger, director of graduate field studies, and Ester Flores, director of undergraduate field studies.*





## WE'VE COME UNDONE

Renovation at the School sent faculty and staff wandering and left us all just a little unhinged

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## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Volume No. 20

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