

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

*Newsletter from Baylor University School of Social Work • Volume No. 18 • July 2007*



*Kelly Baker, MSW student and member of the CCM grant team, at the food pantry at Lakeshore Baptist, where she interns.*

## Community Ministries grant work on track

June marked the end of the first year of the \$1.1 million Strengthening Congregational Community Ministries grant received by the Center for Family and Community Ministries (CFCM).

It was a year that saw many of the goals of the center come to fruition, said Jon Singletary, CFCM director and co-coordinator of the grant. "So many goals of the center became a reality this year, from seeing our students' vision of the impact they can have on communities through the life of a church to hearing church leaders ask how they can be transformational in their community outreach. It is truly exciting to hear the church answer Christ's call to service in new ways."

The purpose of the three-year grant, awarded by the Christ Is Our Salvation Inc. private foundation, is to prepare social work students for ministry in the church, to help congregations see the potential for ministry in their communities, and to prepare materials and resources to enhance congregational community ministries.

"We are so grateful to Shirley and Paul Piper who are the funders for this project," said Gaynor Yancey, professor of church and community and co-coordinator of the grant. "Through this project, students are able to give life to their vocational calling from God to work in congregational community ministry. It also helps congregations discover

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# PLAYING SAFE

Getting a kick out of being together *by Dean Diana Garland*

I have bad knees, so I couldn't play in the Student-Staculty Showdown at the Playground. The "Showdown" was a fierce game of kickball in response to students challenging the faculty and staff, held out on the fields in front of the science building.

The "staculty" let me be the first base coach, but I confess I was really lousy at that too. I was laughing too hard at the shenanigans on the field, and nobody listened to me even when I was screaming advice at them.

Our shirts said it all. We have unofficially called ourselves "staculty" since Helen Harris coined the name, but the shirts actually named us in ink for the first time. "Staculty" is a combination of "faculty" and "staff." In a university culture that more often separates than integrates the parallel groups of colleagues – those who teach and those who keep this place running – we have made a conscious choice in the School of Social Work to be one community, the "staculty."

We meet together unless specialized tasks warrant smaller meetings. We laugh and sometimes cry together. And on this sunny day in April, we played together.

I was mesmerized by the spirit of the game. Several staculty children came and wanted to play – and they wanted to play on the students' team, against their parents. Wordlessly, the students folded them into the game. The first child up kicked the ball straight to the pitcher, Kemper Beard, who caught the ball and then rather deliberately fumbled it before throwing it to first, just after the child skidded in. SAFE! The unspoken norm was set – all children are safe in this game.



Indeed. Nothing was more important, and especially not scores. Nobody had to say anything – it just happened. That's who we are – a community where the well-being of children comes first. What if the world embraced that rule in all of its games?

You probably won't be surprised to learn that the students and our own children trounced us, but we were ahead all through the first part of the game – not that we were counting. Then the students huddled and strategized and really used their strength and skill, while we staculty began to feel the heat of the afternoon and the aging of our muscles.

So the students and children pulled ahead and won in the end. We ran hard, laughed hard and reveled in the warm sun and one another's company. And we watched our students gradually best us. That's exactly who we are and I hope will be for a long time to come.



*Staculty team strategists Vicki Northern, top from left, Helen Harris and Diana Garland confer. Below, Tammy Woods, administrative associate, keeps the spirits high on the sidelines by cheering for everybody.*



and live out their calling in their various communities and into the entire world.”

## Education

The grant provides opportunities for stipends and tuition assistance for social work students called to work in congregational settings. Eleven students met with grant leaders through the year in weekly classes, conducting research, writing curriculum materials, and presenting information about the grant to various church and professional social work groups. Five of these students conducted their field internships in congregations during the spring semester, with three continuing their internships into the summer.

“When I left home to go to college, I left having experienced what God can do when you take a risk and join Him in His work,” said Mallory Homeyer, BSW 2006, MSW/MDiv student. “By then, I also had a glimpse of what I desired to do for the rest of my life – communicating the importance of loving neighbors and building those relationships that can transform lives and churches. God opened a door for me to be on the CCM grant team.”

## Field internships

The five social work students in internships were Kelly Baker, MSW, Lakeshore Baptist, Waco; Tom Worthley, MSW/MDiv 2007, Broadway Baptist, Fort Worth; Jen Adams, MDiv, 2004, MSW, and Sam Oakley, MSW 2007, MDiv, Calvary Baptist, Waco; and Amy Young, MSW, Central Presbyterian, Waco.

Students were required to meet the rigorous standards of the school’s field education program as



*Beth Kilpatrick, center, MSW student and member of the CCM grant team, visits during a lunch-by-donation provided by the CrossTies Ecumenical Church’s Gospel Cafe in an impoverished Waco community.*

they joined with the congregation’s existing or emerging community ministry programs.

Oakley, who interned at Calvary Baptist, an urban church in a largely impoverished area, counseled with individuals, worked with the church’s ESL classes, and helped one member find housing. A high school and college soccer player, Oakley also held Saturday soccer games to draw together children and families from the neighborhood.

“I think it shows that anyone can use what they’re good at in a way to build community and begin relationships,” she said. “Anytime we talk about community ministries, it has to begin with people talking to people and getting to know each other.”

## Resources and materials

The grant leaders and student members spent much of the past year researching and writing curriculum for the “Walking Alongside” materials. The series will include an introductory overview and history of caring unit; biblical studies on poverty, social justice and

holistic ministry; a basic unit on understanding poverty; assessment instruments; and a four-step guideline to sustaining community ministries.

Yancey tested the first of these materials in a series she and some of the CCM students presented at First Baptist, Gatesville, TX, during the spring. Fifty to 60 people attended the weekly series on Sunday evenings.

Additionally, the CCM grant team hosted a focus group consisting of six adult Sunday School teachers from several denominations in mid-May to ask for their input. Editing and revision will continue through the summer with plans to field-test further in the fall and publish by the end of the second year of the grant.

“Transformation of individuals, congregations and communities has become a true reality through this grant,” Yancey said. “Transformation occurs as a result of the faithfulness of God’s people. This collaborative effort definitely establishes a model of how deep and lasting transformation can

# CCM GRANT

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occur when people of faith collaborate.”

## Quarterly journal

The first issue of *Family and Community Ministries: Empowering Through Faith* was mailed July 1. This quarterly practice journal produced by the CFCM staff builds on the legacy of *Family Ministry Journal*, previously published by Louisville Seminary in Kentucky. It is one of the components the CIOS grant helps finance. The journal presents original research, practical case studies, ministry profiles, resource reviews and contemplative pieces to foster reflection.

“We believe the first issue of the journal lives up to its mission,” said Singletary, who serves as editor. “We put together resources that address the heart, head and soul because we are committed to helping congregations and religiously affiliated organizations be the hands and feet of God.”

## Training workshop

This fall, Sept. 7-8, the CFCM will host a training event for church leaders in Texas who seek to address poverty issues. The Texas Cooperative Baptist Fellowship identified 10 congregations that have expressed their interest in this specific community ministry effort. These churches and others will gather at Baylor to take the first concrete steps in assessing their congregational gifts and



SSW Photo

*Meredith Story Williams, MSW 2007, was a member of the CCM grant team this past year. She got hands-on experience in her internship at World Hunger Farm this spring.*

community needs and in designing sustainable ministries with specific, measurable objectives.

“This hands-on workshop will provide tools so that church leaders can begin implementing ministries that have the power to transform their community, both within the church and in the lives of the neighbors who surround them,” Singletary said.

For more information on this training event, see story on page 12.



### FIND OUT MORE ...

To learn more about the grant, visit  
[www.baylor.edu/social\\_work/ccm](http://www.baylor.edu/social_work/ccm)

To learn more about the journal or to subscribe,  
visit [www.baylor.edu/FCM\\_Journal](http://www.baylor.edu/FCM_Journal)

Read about experiences grant students  
had this past year at  
[www.baylor.edu/social\\_work/ccm](http://www.baylor.edu/social_work/ccm)  
and click on “Stories on the Way.”

## JOB SEARCH RESOURCE

**If you're considering a career change and want the latest postings in social work or related fields, social service or ministry settings, check out the School of Social Work's Web site at:**

**[www.baylor.edu/social\\_work/index.php?id=43584](http://www.baylor.edu/social_work/index.php?id=43584)**

**Call Vicki Northern,  
Director of Student Recruitment and  
Career Services, for more information  
or to post a job opening:**

**254-710-4479**





## SHOWDOWN ON THE PLAYGROUND



*Clockwise from top left: Cobie Bernard, MSW, who coordinated the kickball game, delivers a pitch; Jim Ellor eyeing the base path to second; Jon Singletary is called for excessive celebration; the students' victorious team cops some attitude in celebration; and MSW student Jackie Butler winds up at home plate.*

# FAITH TO MOVE AHEAD

*By Gaynor Yancey, Associate Dean for Baccalaureate Studies*

For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven ... A time to be born and a time to die" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, NLT). For several of our BSW students, this scripture became all too personal this spring.

On the evening of Monday, April 30, Caitlin Creed, a freshman pre-social work major at Baylor, was traveling to her grandmother's house in East Texas to study for her finals when she was killed in a head-on collision.

The Baylor community reeled when it heard. Many here knew well Caitlin's parents, Brad and Cathy Creed, from Brad's time as dean of George W. Truett Theological Seminary. Others knew Caitlin and were excited about her plans to join us in the school.

On Tuesday of that week, I received an e-mail from a BSW student asking if I had time to talk. We met early on Wednesday morning, and she began to pour out her heart and the emotions of the past day. She is a member of Tri Delta, a Christian sorority that focuses on service and academics, to which she had been elected vice president and chaplain.

"This has always been an important position in Tri Delta because we spend so much time discussing our vocational calling and trying to discern God's will in our lives," she told me. "When you have this office, you have permission, even though you don't need it, to talk about spiritual things because that's what chaplains do."

She had come to me because she felt overwhelmed by the grief and needs of her sorority sisters as they came to her, in her role as chaplain, to mourn Caitlin's death. Caitlin had been one of four freshman girls who entered the sorority together, and the four had become very close in their first year.

"They are hurting so much, and I don't know anything to do but grieve with them by just listening and comforting them in the best way I know how," she told me. "I keep thinking that I really don't know anything else to do because this has come as such a shock to all of us."

The student's tone was even and strong, but her face revealed the stress of the past 36 hours, and she had the countenance of someone much older. Yet, even as she grieved, she was relying on the very things that she held



*Caitlin Creed*

dear – her faith in God, her role in the sorority, her social work skills, and her opportunity to be of service.

"All I could tell the girls," she said to me, "was that Caitlin would want us to move ahead and not let this stop our lives."

We prayed together, and as I hugged her before she left my office, it occurred to me that Caitlin's untimely passing had provided a path for this student's future. No one would ever want a leadership role bestowed as a result of a tragic accident. Too often, though, it is in such circumstances that such a challenge is thrust upon us. This student's faith was tested with Caitlin's death, and her life would never be what it had been before.

Part of Caitlin's legacy, however, now lives in the life and ministry of this social work student. In her role of comforter and counselor in the sorority, the student found herself saying, "Caitlin would want us to go on and keep serving the Lord by loving each other and loving people who are hurting all around us."

Caitlin was excited about being a social work major. Through the tragedy of her death, her calling will live on through other social work students. We are grateful for Caitlin and her heart for helping others, her passion to make a difference in a person's life. Even though her passing is beyond our understanding, we hold onto the truth that "For everything there is a season."

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Visit the memory page for Caitlin Creed at  
<http://www.autryfh.com> and click on Obituaries

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# A DEEPER CIRCLE

By Dennis Myers, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

*"Community. Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will embrace with us whenever we come into our own power. Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done."*

— Starhawk<sup>1</sup>

Recently, I sat with a group of our graduate students and listened as they reflected on their life within the School of Social Work. They offered a number of helpful suggestions about how learning could be improved, including more field work and more coordination of course assignments, recommendations I anticipated and appreciated.

Then came an unexpected recommendation: We want to have more community in this place. We want more conversations with the faculty, more times sharing and playing together, more opportunities for connecting with colleagues in other classes and with new students.

As I listened, I felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude for what I was hearing because the students had expressed a desire the faculty and staff share.

This request was not about the curriculum or grades or course requirements. It was not about faculty accessibility. In fact, in our most recent exit survey, graduate students gave the highest rating of "very satisfied" (9.3 on a 10-point scale) for the accessibility and helpfulness of faculty. Their new request called

for a deeper circle of relationship with faculty, staff and other students, an affirmation that our everyday lives together form what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called "an inescapable network of mutuality, tied together in a single garment of destiny."<sup>2</sup>

Community is affirmed and evident with the school, and community building is one of the three themes of our curriculum. We even integrate the concept into course titles and content. We have faculty who specialize in community development and students who want to devote their professional

promote brown-bag lunches and other chances for us to connect.

Our students have invited us to an even deeper intentional community, and their request arrives at an opportune moment. Unprecedented growth and increased demands on faculty and staff pull at the fabric of our life together. The school received more than 100 applications for the 2007-2008 MSW class, a 25 percent increase over the previous year. The number of social work graduate students enrolled in our program throughout the past seven years has increased by 507 percent (from 14 in

1999 to 85 in 2006). We expect to double to 60 the number of students graduating in May 2008. With this trend, all of us will need to create ways to nurture community within a larger and more complex circle of learning.

More than ever, we need informal gatherings and attention to opportunities for sacred community within our ordinary greetings and conversation. We can and will make this happen.

Friends of the School of Social Work are a vital part of our circle. Your prayers and gifts of encouragement and expressions of concern lend spiritual and relational energy to this place. We encourage you to send us updates on the transitions in your lives so that this community here can encircle you in return.

<sup>1</sup>Brussat, Frederic & Mary Ann. (1996). *Spiritual Literacy*. New York: Touchstone Press. p. 471

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 471



*Social work students cheer for each other as they take the field at the Showdown on the Playground kickball game.*

lifetimes to it. Signs of mutuality are everywhere every day in a multitude of often unnoticed acts of kindness, and in times of loss and unanticipated suffering, the circle enfolds us and comforts us.

I think, for example, of Tammy Woods, administrative associate, and Marilyn Gusukuma, graduate program manager, who gather our international students and offer direction and support for their journey through new places. Also, NASW/Baylor students regularly

# SPRING EVENTS AT THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



SSW Photo

## NACSW CONFERENCE

*Several students helped present and host at the annual meeting of the North American Association of Christians in Social Work, March 8-10, in Dallas. On Friday evening, the SSW hosted a Tex-Mex buffet with live music to celebrate 100 years of social work education for the church. Above, from left, Kyna Baskin and Catherine Meadows, both BSW 2007, greeted guests with colorful bandanas.*

## BOA MEMBERS VISIT FIELD EDUCATION SITES



*At left, Debbie Simcox, field instructor for Communities In Schools (CIS) at Waco High School, provides information about the program for members of the Board of Advocates. Above, BOA members Laura Anne Vick, from left, Robert Campbell and Billy Schultz enjoy the presentations by Simcox and social work student interns from the spring.*



## TEXAS LEGISLATURE DAY



SSW Photo

*Thirty-five students and faculty members were given a Wear Red send-off at the school before they left for Austin March 27 to attend Texas Legislature Day. Legislative issues regarding immigration and guardianship programs for the elderly were of particular interest to the group.*

## APPRECIATION LUNCHEON



SSW Photo

*The school community gathered May 2 to express its appreciation to Helen Harris, outgoing graduate field education director – much to her dismay.*

## FAMILY DINNER APRIL 26



*More than 200 people attended this year's Family Dinner where Cindy Johnson, top center, was honored as 2007 Alumna of the Year. Dean Diana Garland, above center, visits at the dinner with students Catherine Meadows, Joel Harder and Tihara Vargas.*

## MSW COLLOQUIUM MAY 2



SSW Photo

*After giving their presentations at the Colloquium, MSW students take a moment to relax. From left they are Tom Worthley, Michelle Dacus, Kelly Clines, Jessika Doolittle, Laura Jackson and Emily Julian.*

# LEAVING HER MARK

## *Alumna-of-Year Cindy Johnson honored at Family Dinner*

Two items have hung on the walls of every office Cynthia Johnson, 2007 Alumna of the Year, has had in the past 30 years. Both, she said, keep her centered and mindful of her calling.

The first is a puzzle made by her husband, Roland, that depicts a happy picture. “He wanted me to have a ‘happy place’ to escape to when work frustrations became overwhelming,” she said.

The second is a thank you note given to her by some of her first clients. Johnson began her career at the Heart of Texas MHMR Center in Waco, working in a vocational training program for adults with severe and profound mental retardation. A goal for many of the clients was to learn to write their names or make a mark that was uniquely theirs. When she left her position after two years, the clients presented her with a card that included each of their signatures.

“They were so proud to make their mark,” she said. “And they continue to make their mark on my life today, almost 30 years later. They were among my first teachers, and from them I learned about trust, acceptance and love.”

Johnson graduated from Baylor with a sociology/social work major in 1976. She earned her MSW from the University of Texas at Arlington, and has taken postgraduate courses at Brite Divinity School (TCU) in Fort Worth, TX.

“Like many people, I fell into social work,” Johnson said. “I was



*Dean Diana Garland, left, hugs longtime friend and this year's honoree Cindy Johnson at the School's Family Dinner.*

unaware of social work as a profession or a major. I came to Baylor knowing that I wanted to be of service to people and to the world.”

She experimented with several majors before signing up for a one-hour community service course offered by the sociology/social work department her sophomore year.

“It was there that I first learned about the role of social workers,” she said. “It seemed like a natural fit with my take on the world, my personality, my gifts and limitations, and my sense of vocation as a person of faith.”

Her faith also helps Johnson appreciate the way the school is able to blend Christianity and social work

in what she called a “cutting edge” fashion.

“Baylor demonstrates that students can be trained to provide excellent professional social work services and address the spiritual dimension of life,” she said. “This very tricky line is walked with integrity.”

In her remarks at the Social Work Family Dinner, April 26, Johnson cited Baylor University’s mission “to educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community.”

“There is no discipline taught at this university that is more consistent with that calling than social work,” she said.

Johnson not only understands the blending of spirituality and social work, but lives it every day, said

Diana Garland, dean of the school.

“I have known very few people with the range of skills Cindy possesses, let alone people who use their skills with such effectiveness and such grace. And even fewer people are able to join effectiveness and grace to the high values and deep faith that Cindy represents and embodies,” Garland said. “She has a personal as well as professional presence in the world that has touched the lives of many, many grateful people, of whom I am one.”

Garland is also grateful for Johnson’s commitment to the school.

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# JOHNSON

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"Cindy poured herself out in many ways to make the dream of a Baylor School of Social Work reality," she said, noting that the annual Family Dinner was originally Johnson's idea. "She has served on our Board of Advocates from its beginnings and been a constant friend to us."

Johnson believes that continuing her friendship means advocating for the needs of the school.

"We need a building," she said. "Thirty years ago, I attended classes in the basement of the library. Things are better today. We've made it above ground – even though we are in a parking garage. We need a building that says unapologetically, 'Social Work is a valued major within the mission of Baylor University.'"

***"We need a building that says ... social work is a valued major within the mission of Baylor University."***

Johnson stressed the need for donations to the building fund, the right location for the building, and the need to make it a "green" or environmentally sustainable building.

"We also need money for scholarships," she said. "Students who feel the pull to serve others through social work should be able to come to this program without incurring a debt that will take a lifetime to repay."

Johnson encouraged individual donors and partnerships with other institutions.

"Let our voices be heard. Let our support be seen," she said. "And, let our lives bear witness to our grateful hearts."

Johnson is executive director of Courage and Renewal – North Texas (formerly Tarrant County Courage to Teach), an organization that offers resources and retreats to help professionals rekindle their passion for work and commitment to serve.

– Franci Rogers



**MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR**

**June 28-30**

**Aug 10  
11**

**Sept 20  
21**

**Plan ahead:  
May 7, 2008  
May 16, 2008**

## CALLING ALL ALUMNI

***Let us hear from you!***

Please complete the information below and provide a photo, if possible. (Sorry, photos cannot be returned.) Send information 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 current) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

Phone ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Title or Position \_\_\_\_\_

What are your updates (career, family, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

## ALUMNI GATHERINGS

***Sept. 7 – Tulsa, OK***

Continuing education workshop

***Oct. 1 – Louisville, KY***

Centennial Celebration of social work education  
for the church

***Oct. 20 – Little Rock, AR***

Centennial Celebration at the WMU National Convention

***Call 254-710-1199 for more information***

**CBF General Assembly  
Washington, DC**

**Summer Convocation  
Summer Graduation**

**Fall Worship Service  
Board of Advocates Meeting**

**MSW Practice Colloquium  
SSW Convocation**

# NEWS BRIEFS

## STUDENT HONORS THIS SPRING

Several students were honored this spring for their accomplishments. At the Family Dinner, the following students were recognized: **Charletra Hurt**, BSW 2006, MSW at George Warren Brown School of Social Work in St. Louis, Mo., Outstanding BSW Student; **Walker Moore**, MSW 2007, MDiv, Outstanding MSW Student; **Catherine Meadows**, BSW 2007, BSW Intern of the Year; and **Teran Yaklin**, MSW 2007, MSW Intern of the Year.

At the Convocation, students honored were: **Ella Bess Bumgarner** and **Laura Jackson**, Outstanding Grant Proposals; **Nicole Back**, Outstanding Research; and **Cobie Bernard**, **Kelly Clines** and **Shame-thia (MeMe) Webb**, Spirit of Social Work.

Two BSW students, **Stacey McComb** and **Sarah Bush**, also were invited to participate in the Academic Honors Convocation April 11, which recognizes undergraduate academic excellence.

## WMU STUDENT STIPENDS APPROVED

The School of Social Work was awarded \$15,000 for student stipends for the 2007-2008 academic year from the Woman's Missionary Union's Mary Hill Davis grant.

Six students benefited from the \$12,000 received in 2006-2007 with field stipends in their internships with faith-based organizations and congregations.



**LITERACY EVENT** *More than 150 people attended the Conference for Internationals and Literacy Ministries, June 14-16, at Baylor. Rob Rogers, center, director of the Center for Literacy, and Lester Meriwether, at right, director of Literacy Connexus, hosted the event, which marked the 50th year of literacy ministries at Baylor. Rogers received a plaque from ProLiteracy International honoring the center's service to the community and churches addressing literacy needs.*

## POVERTY TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR CHURCH LEADERS SEPT. 7-8

The Center for Family and Community Ministries will hold a workshop Sept. 7-8 on the Baylor campus titled "Walking Alongside: Addressing Poverty in Community Ministries."

The workshop is for church leaders who are seeking hands-on opportunities to explore new ways of doing community ministry that can have an immediate impact on their congregations and their communities.

Presenters will include Diana Garland, dean of the School of Social Work; Gaynor Yancey, professor of church and community; Jon Singletary, CFCM director; and Angela Dennison, CFCM associate director.

The center will present its new

curriculum, titled "Walking Alongside," that helps congregations understand the basics of poverty, scriptural imperatives to address the needs of the poor, and assessment and evaluation methods to increase sustainability of community ministries.

The training event is made possible with the support of Christ Is Our Salvation Inc. and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Space for the workshop is limited. The cost per congregation is \$100. For more information, please contact Amy Castello, workshop coordinator, at Amy\_Castello@baylor.edu. To register online, go to [www.baylor.edu/social\\_work/cfcm/index.php?id=35503](http://www.baylor.edu/social_work/cfcm/index.php?id=35503).

Congratulations to Jim Ellor, Rob Rogers and T. Laine Scales for receiving tenure during the 2006-2007 academic year.



# SSW ALUMNI NEWS

**Licensure update:** **Ivy Fannin** (MSW 2007) and **Lauren Cox Staats** (BASW 2005, MSW 2006) passed the LMSW test in May.

**Christy Craddock** (MSW 2006, MDiv 2007) has accepted a position with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and will be working with one of its inner-city ministries, Touching Miami with Love, in Florida. **Jason Pittman** (MSW/MDiv 2002) will be her supervisor at TML. She will work with children, youth, families and homeless persons. In April, Christy was ordained at Calvary Baptist Church in Waco.

**Sandra Hennip** (MSW 2001) accepted a position with Catholic Charities in Fort Worth as a social worker with its refugee resettlement program, which provides help with employment, English training and cultural education.

**Julie Johnson** (MSW 2003) is a licensed social worker in the Women's Program at Princeton House Behavioral Health in Princeton, NJ. She works with an interdisciplinary team of professionals to facilitate the healing of trauma and to promote women's health issues. Her areas of interest include women's issues, childhood trauma and substance abuse.

**Lauren Plog Polson** (MSW 2004) married **Clay Polson** (MSW/MDiv 2003) in December 2004. Lauren recently passed her LCSW licensure exam and has been working at

the Family Health Center for the past three years where she serves as the women's health advocate, providing counseling and case management services. An article that she and Rob Rogers, professor of social work, wrote titled "Counseling and Mental Health Referral Practices of Church Staff," was published in the spring 2007 issue of *Social Work and Christianity*. Lauren\_FPC@yahoo.com

**Matthew Schobert** (MSW 2002) recently accepted a social work position on the acute psychiatry unit with the Veteran's Affairs Medical Center in Waco, TX. For the past three years, Matthew worked as unit manager/social worker at the Methodist Children's Home in Waco.

**Brandon Tidwell** (MSW 2002) is at FedEx in its Corporate Social Responsibility office, managing grant requests and giving in key markets. Brandon also taught an undergraduate social work practice course on groups and communities this spring at the University of Memphis. btidwell76@yahoo.com



**Kelly Atkinson**, BASW 2001, MSW 2002, and husband, John, welcomed Ellie Haven May 31. She weighed 6 lbs., 13 ounces and was 19 inches long. Kelly has served as a research associate on the CIOs grant this past year.

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## NEW FACES AT THE SCHOOL



**ESTER FLORES** joins the school as director of baccalaureate field education. She is working toward her PhD at Our Lady of the Lake, and most recently served as a medical social worker at Wilford Hall Medical Center-Neonatal ICU in San Antonio. Flores has almost 20 years of experience as a social worker in settings such as Americare Hospice, McAllen Work Rehabilitation and Buckner Children and Family Services. She was program director at Child Protective Services in Edinburg, TX, for six years and taught and coordinated undergraduate field education at the University of Texas Pan American.



**DAVID WILKINSON** is the school's director of development. He has a BA in journalism from Oklahoma Baptist University and an MDiv and DMin from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He most recently was minister of Christian education and discipleship at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth. Previously he has been vice president for seminary relations at Southern Seminary and coordinator for communications and marketing for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

# NOT TOO COMFORTABLE

*Undergraduate student ready for new experiences*

Senior BSW student Amanda Floyd has a hard time staying within her comfort zone. That's because she keeps expanding it.

For instance, as a freshman at Baylor, she felt "too comfortable" in the major she had chosen, she said. "I was looking for meaning in my life. All I knew is that I wanted to help people. My mom suggested social work."

One meeting with a social work faculty member was all it took. Since then, Floyd, who graduates in May, has embraced the social work experience in and out of the classroom.

Her service learning assignments have included working with children in an after-school program, helping the aging at a nursing home (where she still returns to visit with residents), and assisting families in a Headstart program.

When it was time to look at field internships, once again Floyd pushed the edges of her comfort zone and asked to work with at-risk children and youth.

"I chose that population group because I wanted more exposure there," said Floyd, who will intern at Child Protective Services this fall. "It's a group I haven't worked with a great deal and I'm not really comfortable with that. But I'm really excited to become more comfortable with it. That will come with experience."

Floyd was well prepared as a child to push herself to try new things.



*Amanda Floyd with one of her new friends at the Family Legacy Missions Christian day camp for HIV/AIDS orphans in Zambia.*

If she's nervous now about a new venture, she remembers what her father told her when she sang solos and duets in church as a child.

"I would tell him, 'I'm scared,' and he would say, 'It's a good thing; it means you want to do a good job.' So when I start to worry, I remember that I'm supposed to," she said.

Last summer, Floyd went to Africa for two weeks with Family Legacy Missions to a Christian day camp for HIV/AIDS orphans in Zambia.

"I felt God calling me to Zambia and it was life changing," she said. "I now measure my life as before going to Zambia and after."

She recently returned from a second summer trip there to visit the children, ages 12 to 15, from last year's camp.

"I got to visit their school and see what it's like," she said. "It's opened my eyes to the whole world."

The way of life in Zambia, she said, is different in a very positive way.

"I feel like they enjoy life so much more," she said. "Here, we're more materialistic. We're all guilty of that, myself included. But there, they focus on God instead of things. They enjoy the company of others without worry about material things."

Floyd believes her studies at the School of Social Work prepared her to better understand different ways of life. Her Introduction to Social Work

class taught her leadership skills and how to relate to people. Her Policy class gave her practical experience in how to facilitate open discussion while respecting diverse opinions.

The faculty make the difference, she said. She has been amazed that professors sometimes hold class at their homes, give students their home telephone numbers and meet at flexible times.

"Dr. [Diana] Garland even hosted a party for students after the Family Dinner," she said. "My friends at other universities never talk about things like that with their teachers – not to mention the dean!"

Floyd plans to continue at Baylor for her MSW, but does not know what aspect of social work she will choose, or where she will live.

"Everything I do, I get so attached to," she said. "I'm open to living, working, ministering outside the country or right here in Waco. Whatever God calls me to do, I'm going to do."

– Franci Rogers



# FACULTY UPDATE

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**Sherr, M. E.**, & Jones, J. (in press). Considering family and significant others in the faculty recruitment process: A study of social work recruiting practices. *Advances in Social Work*.

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**Singletary, J. E.** (in press). Community and family models of care for orphans and vulnerable children. *Social Work and Christianity*.

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## DINNER CONVERSATION

Students and staff members visit at the annual Family Dinner.

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*Photos by Robert Rogers, Baylor Photography*

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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