



SOCIAL WORK

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Message from the Department Chair

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Welcome to the spring 2016 edition of the Winthrop Social Work e-newsletter. This spring has been a remarkable season for our students. BSW student Lauren Goodwin was among four recipients of the prestigious President's Award for Academic Excellence representing the highest academic achievement among all graduating Winthrop undergraduate students. MSW student Shelly Price was named the South Carolina MSW Student of the Year by the South Carolina Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. And, MSW student Danielle Silberman joined Professor Allison Gibson as they presented their research on end-of-life social media use at the National Association of Death Education and Counseling conference. You will also see in this newsletter that a number of other students were recognized at our annual student awards ceremony in honor of their academic excellence and achievements.

In other educational and professional development activities, 18 students joined Wendy Sellers, Ph.D., and Duane Neff, Ph.D., for a spring break study abroad social work experience in Nicaragua. Students in the BSW Club met with First Lady Laura Mahony to gain insight about Mrs. Mahony's professional social work practice experience. And, the MSW Student Association conducted a successful linen drive in support of Family Promise of York County.

Winthrop Social Work lost one of our own this spring when Janiva (Jay) Willis (MSW, 2008) was tragically killed in an automobile accident. Jay was the founding director of the I Dream in Colors initiative and, at the time of her death, was directing a cross-country fund-raising bike ride project in support of her nonprofit initiative. The loss of Jay is tragic for Winthrop and for the social work practice community.

Even though we offered our farewells to BSW and MSW students who graduated this May, we also welcomed a brand new cohort of MSW students to the Winthrop Social Work family. Our circle of social work life continues, and we are honored and proud to be Winthrop Eagles. Congratulations to our graduates and, to our new students, welcome to Winthrop.

Have a wonderful summer!

Deana F. Morrow



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Memorializing Social Worker, Janiva “Jay” Willis

It is with much regret that we share with you a recent loss in the social work community. Master of Social Work (MSW) alumna Janiva (“Jay”) Willis was fatally injured in a car accident on April 12, 2016. Willis earned her Bachelor of Science degree in physical education and a minor in biology from Winthrop in 2005. As an undergraduate student Willis was known as one of the best power hitters in Winthrop history. She was a four-time All-Big South Conference selection in 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005. Her batting skills helped earn her a spot on the Canadian National Team in 2005 and 2007. Willis returned to Winthrop, and in 2008 was a member of the first cohort to complete an MSW degree. Willis was an excellent student in our MSW program. She was well-liked and well-respected by faculty and by her peers. Upon graduation, Willis went to work for Alexander Youth Network in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she soon rose in the ranks to a supervisory position. Willis went on to work as a clinical supervisor for Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) with at-risk teenagers at Youth Villages in Charlotte, North Carolina. While there, she received a Sustained Excellence Award for her work in MST, an award for being in the top one percent internationally for her work with emotionally troubled teens and their families. In 2012, we were honored to have Willis return as the keynote speaker for Winthrop’s Convocation ceremony welcoming new students. In 2014, Willis made the bold decision to embark on her own non-profit initiative, I Dream in Colors, which focuses on developing youth mentoring programs to support academic achievement and life success. She was completing the 3, 700-mile Dream Challenge Tour, a 78-day cross-country bicycle tour to raise funds for her organization and mission. It was while on this tour that she and a colleague were fatally injured.

Willis’s death is a devastating loss for Winthrop’s Department of Social Work and also for the entire Winthrop University community. Recently, longtime Winthrop supporters Ann and Vernon Terry renamed their endowed softball scholarship after Willis. This scholarship supports softball student-athletes who display leadership qualities within their team and in the Winthrop community.

To make a gift in support of the Janiva Willis Endowed Softball Scholarship, visit www.winthropalumni.com/give/janivawillis.



Department of Social Work Presents at Death Education and Counseling National Conference

By: Allison Gibson, Ph.D.

This past April, Allison Gibson, assistant professor, and Danielle Silberman, MSW candidate and graduate research assistant, presented their research on how people use social media at end-of-life at the [Association of Death Education and Counseling \(ADEC\)](#) conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Have you ever wondered what will happen to your e-mail after you die? What about your Facebook account? These were the questions on Gibson's and Silberman's minds when they set out to explore their project: "Preparing Your Online Life for End of Life". The study examined the deceased user policies of popular social networking sites (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Gmail, Hotmail, iTunes, etc.) to determine what commonalities existed among deceased user policies; what options existed for individuals to dictate preferences about what will happen to their account once they pass away; and what options do families have regarding keeping the account going, memorializing the account, or terminating the account after the deceased user has passed away.

According to Gibson, "In general, these websites tend to be very reactive in that as an individual user, you cannot set up your preferences in advance, rather it'll be up to your family or next of kin to decide what they want to happen to your account after you pass away. This mirrors our culture's attitude towards planning for end-of-life. Of all the providers we reviewed, only Google (Gmail) and Facebook gave users the option to set a 'next of kin' preference to who should inherit your account and digital media after they passed away. This is important for social workers to be familiar with because if one is working with clients at end-of-life, they may need to discuss these preferences with clients. Some clients may want to maintain a digital legacy with their social networking accounts whereas others may want their accounts deleted after they are gone."

The second project, "The Viral Goodbye", examined end-of-life messages that internet users had posted regarding their experiences dying with a terminal illness. Gibson and Silberman were very interested in examining what these individuals wanted to say to the world when they were dying and to determine whether or not posting such messages appeared therapeutic for the individuals posting updates on social media sites. The study utilized a strengths-based content analysis and collected a substantial amount of advice on living life to the fullest and what those who posted regarded as most important in their lives. It appeared that all 50 users who were reviewed posted as a way to cope with their terminal illness. Gibson and Silberman hope to elaborate on this study in the future to examine how clinicians can utilize interventions that incorporate this element of "viral goodbyes" into their end-of-life counseling.

They are hopeful that both studies will be published over the next year. Silberman will graduate with her Master of Social Work degree in May 2016 and has accepted a position with her field placement site, [Hospice and Palliative Care Charlotte Region](#).



Study Abroad 2016

During Spring Break 2016, Wendy Sellers, Ph.D., and Duane Neff, Ph.D., led a short-term study abroad in Nicaragua. A total of 18 students, both BSW and MSW, participated in the course and learned about sustainable development in Nicaragua. This adventure of a lifetime included lively bus rides with many chickens, travel to a protected island with the assistance of a horse and cart, and lessons in hand-washing laundry on impromptu home visits. The students came back to Winthrop University with connections with new "amigos" via social media, increased understanding of Spanish, and a heightened awareness of the interconnectedness of this world. ¡Adelante!



Social Work Month

March is annually recognized as [National Social Work Month](#). This year's theme was "[Forging Solutions Out of Challenges](#)." The Department of Social Work joined the national campaign by hosting several events to raise awareness of social issues in our local community. Allison Gibson, Ph.D., hosted a panel discussion with community professionals on the topic elder abuse and neglect. The BSW Club held a movie night. Monique Constance-Huggins, Ph.D., challenged students through a contest where they were encouraged to submit a short video, poster, or photo showing problem-solving efforts in social work practice. Lastly, the Master of Social Work Student Association, under the leadership of Virginia Link, held a linen drive to collect items for [Family Promise of York County](#) whose mission is "to provide a comprehensive program of shelter, meals, and support services to homeless families through coordination with area churches, social service agencies, and volunteers."



Lauren Goodwin President's Academic Excellence Award

We congratulate Lauren Goodwin for receiving the President's Award for Academic Excellence at the May 7 undergraduate Commencement. Goodwin was one of four students who received the award for having the highest cumulative GPA. Goodwin graduated summa cum laude earning her Bachelor of Social Work degree. While pursuing her degree, she held a number of leadership positions including President of the Academic Success Center Tutor Council, Student Vice President of the Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society, and Co-Chair for the Winthrop Presidential Search. Goodwin completed her field internship in fall 2015 with the Office of Victims' Assistance under the Department of Health and Counseling Services at Winthrop. She completed an additional internship in spring 2016 with the Academic Success Center at Winthrop University. Goodwin plans to earn a master's degree in higher education student affairs. Congratulations, Lauren, on all of your accomplishments, and we wish you well in the future.



Shelley Price NASW-SC MSW Student of the Year

We congratulate Shelley Price on receiving the MSW Student of the Year Award from National Association of Social Work-South Carolina Chapter. She earned her BSW degree at Winthrop and will complete her MSW degree this spring, thus making her a double-eagle. Price was recognized by NASW-SC for her work with Richland County Government as an intern supervised by the Honorable Jim Manning, MSW, and Richland County Councilman. During her internship with Richland County, Price demonstrated excellence in assessing and responding to the needs of community constituents and stakeholders by planning and coordinating council events and in engaging in strategic planning initiatives. In addition to her internship and other academic work, Price is employed as an intake coordinator and volunteer coordinator at Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services where she is responsible for agency intake data completion, agency procurement practices, volunteer coordination, and direct services to clients. She is certified in trauma-informed care and as a benefit bank counselor. We look forward to seeing where Price's career goes with her MSW knowledge in hand!

Congratulations to all of our graduates!



BSW Cohort



MSW Weekend Cohort



MSW Full-Time Cohort

Linda M. Ashley Scholarship

Phi Alpha Inductees

The Department of Social Work congratulates this year's inductees to the Epsilon Alpha Chapter of Phi Alpha. BSW students may be invited to join Phi Alpha after achieving sophomore status, completing eight hours of social work coursework, and earning a GPA of 3.25 or higher in social work courses and a cumulative 3.0 or higher. MSW students may be invited to join Phi Alpha after achieving last semester status with a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher.

BSW Students

Jade E. Arant
Courtne G. Bailey
Micah C. Burris
Lily M. Carter
Ashley B. Collins
Cristina M. d'Erizans
Ashley E. Eason

Krystal L. Frisbie
Taylor J. Hendricks
Vinita S. Maigur
Elle M. Plattenburger
Lindsey N. Scrogin
Victoria A. Shepard

MSW Students

A.J. Alford
Isabelle Auger
Davina Broughton
Heather L. Brown
Jill L. Bumgardner
Heather A. Chavis
Sydney Wright Estes
Tara S. Hall,
Stacy L. Harker
Ainsley T. Hebert

Michele N. Jones
Leah M. Naliboff
Shelley L. Price
Stephen M. Richardson
Suzanne L. Robinson
Danielle R. Silberman
Brenna N. Thomason
Celencia B. Wallace
Celia M. Walpole



Cristina d'Erizans, BSW Candidate

The 2016 BSW Ashley Scholarship recipient this year is Christina d'Erizans. d'Erizans is a student in our BSW program who brings thirteen years of work experience to her academic pursuits. She is a Dean's List student and Phi Alpha honor student who graduated in May, and she has been accepted to begin her MSW studies at Winthrop this fall.

d'Erizans is a cancer survivor who, after undergoing treatment, was inspired to begin volunteering at the Boys and Girls Club of York County in 2003. Because of her good work there, she was hired and worked her way up to Unit Director in six years' time.

d'Erizans left the Boys and Girls Club in 2009 to take on a new role at New Hope Carolinas, a psychiatric residential treatment facility. Her role at New Hope involves therapeutic work with youth who exhibit aggressive behavior problems. d'Erizans currently holds the position of Team Supervisor where she oversees day-to-day unit operations.

In addition to her work at New Hope, d'Erizans completed her BSW field placement at the York County Department of Social Services with a focus in intensive foster care and clinical services. Congratulations Christina!

Brandy Capps, MSW Candidate

The 2016 MSW recipient of the Ashley Scholarship is Brandy Capps. Capps is a student in our full-time MSW program. She started working at a residential group home at the age of 19. She wrote in her scholarship application that, based on her experiences in group home work, "I knew I wanted to do more for our community and most of all I wanted to help people." Capps recognized that a college education could enable her to do more. But, as she shared in her scholarship essay, "I always wanted to finish my degree, but life happened."

It took her a while, but Capps graduated from Gardner Webb University with a Bachelor of Science degree in human services in 2014. Along the way, she worked as a clerk for the Florida Department-of-Health Infectious Disease Clinic, as a home health aide, as a residential care provider for people with developmental disabilities, and as a direct support professional for special needs clients.

Capps completed her initial MSW internship at Fresenius Medical Care where she worked with patients undergoing dialysis treatment related to renal failure. Capps also serves as a Guardian Ad Litem in Gaston County. Congratulations Brandy!



Academic Excellence Awards

Emily Rounds, BSW Candidate

The 2016 recipient of the BSW Academic Excellence Award is Emily Rounds. Rounds earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and also a Bachelor of Social Work this past semester. She graduated *summa cum laude* and with honors on May 7, 2016. While pursuing these degrees, she received the Kinard Scholarship, the Life Scholarship, the D. Jennings Tindal Scholarship, and the Edward Fersner Scholarship. She was active in several academic clubs on campus, including the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and Alpha Lambda Delta. Rounds also served as the treasurer for the BSW Club. She completed her field placement at the Catawba Indian Nation Head Start. Her field instructor, Melissa Harris, shared that “Emily is very professional and exhibits the knowledge of social work that exceeds most of the interns that we have had the pleasure of working with.” She will be moving to Colorado where she will be pursuing a Master of Social Work at the University of Denver. We wish her the best and look forward to seeing all she will accomplish. Congratulations Emily!

Michele Jones, MSW Candidate

The 2016 recipient of the MSW Academic Excellence Award is Michele Jones, a weekend MSW student who graduated this May. Jones has demonstrated academic excellence and distinction in all aspects of her MSW education. She was an active and engaged student in the classroom whose assignments convey depth of thinking and learning in analyzing and synthesizing complex theories and methodologies relative to real world social work practice.

Jones excelled in her internships at Catawba Area Agency on Aging, Interim Hospice, and Carolinas Healthcare System. During her time in the MSW program, Jones also served as a graduate research assistant on a department program evaluation contract with the S.C. Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, she served on a graduate student work group that consulted with Assessment Coordinator Duane Neff, Ph.D., on program evaluation practices for the weekend program.

Jones is employed full-time at HomeBridge, an agency that serves older adults and families with a focus on support services to allow clients to age in place. She began her work at HomeBridge as a social work case manager and was just recently promoted to manager of community services where she now supervises a unit of more than 80 employees and caregivers. Jones is a member of the National Association of Social Workers and the Mecklenburg Care Transitions Coalition. Congratulations Michele!

Field Excellence Awards

Teena Allen, BSW Candidate

The 2015 recipient of the BSW Field Excellence Award is Teena Allen. Mr. Perry Owen, associate field director, shared that even prior to the placement, he could tell that Allen was going to be fully engaged in her internship with United Way of York County. Allen became a strong advocate for the homeless population of York County, always going above and beyond expectations. During her career at Winthrop, Allen continued to work full-time as customer relations representative with State Farm insurance as well as being an incredible mother to two children. Allen is described as a consummate professional who is always willing to lend a hand. Allen graduated this May with her BSW degree and will continue her professional development by joining Winthrop University’s Master of Social Work program this fall. Congratulations Teena!

Marissa Schnell, MSW Candidate

The 2016 recipient of the MSW Field Excellence Award is Marissa Schnell, a weekend MSW student who graduated this May. She completed her advanced MSW internship at Pat’s Place, a child advocacy center in Charlotte, North Carolina. Schnell served as a third family advocate for the agency and provided clinical case management and support services to families and children being interviewed for concerns of sexual abuse, witness to violence, and other forms of child maltreatment.

During this field experience she was able to learn the community approach Pat’s Place coordinates and uses as it serves this challenging population. Schnell’s biggest asset, according to her field instructor, was her ability to use her professional experience in working with youth who sexually harm to provide an in-service to the clinicians and staff at Pat’s Place since this an area that interfaces with the work being done there. Not only was Schnell able to “make it” in this field placement and rise to their high level of expectations, she was actually able to contribute her knowledge and skills to move the agency forward in being even more effective in serving the population. In submitting this nomination, field instructor Kris Taylor shared that Schnell is “always willing to jump in, seeks out opportunities to learn more and likes to be challenged. She is the type of intern and employee anyone would want.” Congratulations Marissa!

The Department of Social Work will host two professional workshops summer 2016. Each one-day workshop will provide six continuing education credits. Cost of each workshop is \$79. Registration information can be found on the [Department of Social Work's News & Events Page](#).

Beyond Writing: Tools & Strategies for Successful Grants

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The focus of this training is to reveal what it takes to WIN a proposal, not just write one. What are some initial steps nonprofits should take BEFORE the writing process begins? This session will cover basic grant writing elements, customizing proposals, locating grants and developing relationships with funders. Practical tools and tips are shared through interactive exercises and materials.

WHEN:

June 10

8:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Schedule includes two 15 minute breaks and one hour for lunch on your own.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: *As a result of participating in this training, participants will be able to:*

1. Learn grant writing basics and how to make a compelling case for your project.
2. Discover how to find funders that fit your mission and purpose.
3. Identify your organization's readiness to write a successful grant proposal.
4. Find out about free guides and other resources available to empower nonprofits to be successful in gaining funds.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

The training is designed for those new to grant writing, as well as seasoned professionals, who want to learn how to raise more money through funding diversification and writing grant proposals that win. This includes executive directors, development staff, program directors/staff, board members, and volunteers.

PRESENTER: Pat Kelsaw, MSW, is a successful grant writer for community, faith based organizations, and health and human services agencies. She is also a certified grant reviewer through the Administration for Children and Families and the Office of Extramural Activities Review.

Building a Life Worth Living – Understanding the Foundation of DBT

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The focus of this training is to increase participants' awareness of the foundational elements for Dialectical Behavior Therapy, why it is successful in helping others build a life worth living, and how to incorporate self-care while utilizing DBT in clinical practice.

WHEN:

July 22

8:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Schedule includes two 15 minute breaks and one hour for lunch on your own.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: *As a result of participating in this training, participants will be able to:*

1. Explain the basic foundational elements of DBT.
2. Identify various populations and treatment settings where DBT is applicable.
3. Apply basic DBT crisis survival skills for use in their own practice and with clients in order to help build a life worth living.
4. Identify strategies for self-care.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

The training is designed for social workers, counselors, psychologists, mental health professionals, and substance abuse professionals.

PRESENTER: Jennifer Butler, LISW, is employed full-time with Columbia Area Mental Health Center as program director of the Behavior Therapy Program. She has been in practice for more than 18 years. Her areas of expertise include mental health, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, suicide prevention and treatment, and trauma-focused CBT. She has worked in both the private and government sectors with all age groups.



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Please consider supporting the Department of Social Work with your gift to the Social Work Program Enrichment Fund.

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