Silver School’s Research Centers Make Their Mark

Over the last several years, the NYU Silver School of Social Work has been evolving into a research-intensive school. Seven new research faculty have been hired, and research funded by federal grants and foundation sponsors has increased dramatically. In the midst of this transformation, the School’s research centers have already made their footprints and are providing a focus for the School’s research agenda.

The McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research was founded in 2007 through the generosity of Constance and Martin Silver. The Institute conducts, promotes, and disseminates interdisciplinary applied research to address root causes of, effects of, and responses to poverty. It partners with New York-based agencies and communities to develop research projects and policy and advocacy recommendations that have short and long-term social impact. Additionally, the Institute collaborates with multiple departments and schools across NYU.

“The McSilver Institute is the umbrella under which many people can come together to study poverty and its effects,” said Professor Mary McKay, the Institute’s inaugural director. She is an internationally acclaimed expert in the areas of urban child mental health and prevention services research. “McSilver will work diligently to create knowledge that translates directly into policies and practices that assist those living in poverty.”

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The Institute directs multiple projects in New York, Argentina, and South Africa. One such program is Step-Up, designed by African-American and Latino adolescents (14 to 17 years of age) experiencing significant academic, social, and emotional issues. Step-Up connects young people with mental health clinical supports, positive young adult role models, supported internships, employment opportunities, and non-stigmatizing family-level interventions. Funded by the Robin Hood Foundation, the program will serve approximately 100 students this year in high schools located in East Harlem and the South Bronx.

“Because it’s designed by youth collaborating with researchers, family members, and service providers, Step-Up is quite distinct from typical services. It is informed by existing evidence, but involves clinical staff, as well as parent and youth advocates, and prioritizes supporting youth within their communities and families in non-stigmatizing ways,” said McKay. Preliminary findings indicate high levels of engagement, as well as improvement in life skills that are applicable to academic and employment success.

The McSilver Institute website is scheduled to launch in January 2012.

The Center for Latino Adolescent and Family Health (CLAFH) investigates the role of the Latino family in shaping the development and well-being of Latino adolescents. Based in New York City with an office in the Dominican Republic, the Center’s research addresses key issues that affect Latino families and the needs of New York’s diverse Latino community in national and global contexts.

Co-directed by Professor Vincent Guilamo-Ramos and Professor James Jaccard, CLAFH works to provide information and interventions directly to parents about raising healthy teens.

As part of October’s “Let’s Talk” Month—intended to encourage parents to speak with their children about sex—CLAFH commissioned a poll with Planned Parenthood Federation of America gauging parents’ comfort level talking to their kids about sex. Along with the poll results, CLAFH made available online, at no cost, Families Talking Together, a family-based program designed to support effective parent-adolescent communication among African-American and Latino families.

Another project currently underway at the center examines 14- to 16-year old Latino and African-American adolescents, their parents, and their romantic partners to better understand the relevant dynamics surrounding adolescent risk behavior. The project is funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Development.

“What’s novel about this is that we have very little insight into what happens with couples in early adolescence,” said Guilamo-Ramos. So far, CLAFH researchers have found that while adolescent romantic relations are brief, teens are much more likely to have sex if they are in a relationship. “When they are in that three month period, they are very vulnerable,” he said. “So that’s a big message for parents because they are not realizing that serious dating too early for teens is a big predictor for sexual debut.”

You can learn more about CLAFH, and download Families Talking Together, at: www.nyu.edu/socialwork/clafh.
A Letter from the Dean

Dear alumni and friends:

I am happy to report that the 2011-12 academic year has gotten off to a productive start. We welcomed seven new faculty members this year, whom you will learn more about in this issue of the Newsletter. They are leaders in internationally influential practice and research on important issues such as engaging urban youth and their families in mental health services, family interventions to reduce teen risk behaviors, the effects of work schedules and immigration on child development, and indigenous women’s roles in Central American economic development. With these strong new faculty, the outstanding faculty already at Silver, and the growth in the School’s research infrastructure—including the development of two research centers, the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research and the Center for Latino Adolescent and Family Health—we are building on the School’s reputation and creating a deep reservoir of scholarship that will inform the future of social work practice and policy. Even as we work to grow our research enterprise, we continue our commitment to clinical excellence.

The goals for the future of the School can be seen in our strategic plan, which we anticipate to be completed by the end of the year. The plan will guide the School over the next five years with priorities that include strengthening the School’s research infrastructure and productivity, a rededication to social justice and human diversity as central values for our profession, and a re-engagement with the local and international community.

Since the last edition of the Newsletter, I have traveled twice to Shanghai, the site of NYU’s next portal campus. NYU Shanghai, in partnership with East China Normal University, will be a major initiative that will anchor the School’s international work. I am working with our faculty to determine how we can best position the Silver School at NYU Shanghai.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Lynn Videka
Dean and Professor

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25 West 4th Street, Suite 403
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NYU Silver Welcomes Seven New Faculty Members

Seven new faculty members joined the NYU Silver School of Social Work this fall. These new faculty have exceptional research and scholarship backgrounds in areas such as quantitative and qualitative research methods, positive youth development, and reduction of youth risk behavior.

Dean Lynn Videka stated, “With the addition of these outstanding scholarly and practice leaders to the Silver School’s faculty, the School is poised to reach its goals for playing a key role in building knowledge for the next generation of social work, providing an excellent BS and MSW education, and educating the future professoriate in a globally recognized and rigorous PhD program.”

The School has appointed four tenured faculty.

Professor Liliana R. Goldín conducts research in the Guatemala highlands where the mostly indigenous Maya populations cope with poverty and marginality. Her current research explores workers’ employment options and consequences of turnover in the international export processing plants located in rural areas. She has also been named a faculty fellow at the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research and at the Center for Latino Adolescent and Family Health.

Professor Wen-Jui Han has an extensive background in the issues surrounding policies and services designed to enhance the welfare of children and their families. Han’s current research focuses on maternal employment and child cognitive, social, and emotional well-being; the extent to which parental work schedules affect child care arrangements and child well-being; and the developmental experiences of U.S. young children in immigrant families.

Professor James Jaccard focuses his research on adolescent problem behaviors related to unintended pregnancy and substance use. He has developed programs to teach parents of adolescents how to more effectively communicate and parent their children so as to reduce the risk of unintended pregnancies and problems due to substance use. He has also been named associate dean for research and is the co-director of the Center for Latino Adolescent and Family Health.

Professor Mary McKay joins as the McSilver Professor of Poverty Studies and director of the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research. Prior to joining Silver, she served as the head of the Division of Mental Health Services Research at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. She has received substantial federal funding for research focused on meeting the mental health and health prevention needs of inner-city youth and families.

Other faculty appointments include:

Evelyn J. Nieves, clinical assistant professor of social work and the coordinator of the Rockland County Branch Campus. As the former director of Behavior Health Services for Newark Community Health Center, Nieves was charged with integrating behavioral health into a primary health care setting. She has more than 30 years of experience in executive management, academia, and behavioral health. Her current interest includes military social work, which emerged from her experience providing behavioral health services to U.S. military service members/families in Europe.

Geetha Gopalan, faculty fellow at the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research, who has research interests in family-level interventions to improve youth mental health and reduce youth risk behavior, particularly for families with intensive service involvement and extreme psychosocial needs.

Catherine Vu, assistant professor/faculty fellow, awarded a post-doctoral fellow for 2011-13 in conjunction with the NYU Postdoctoral and Transition Program for Academic Diversity Fellowship. She is interested in the relationship between human service agencies and their organizational capacity to serve low-income minority groups.

To view a list of faculty publications for 2010-11, read the School’s Annual Report at:

www.nyu.edu/socialwork/annualreport
Outstanding Silver School Alumni Recognized at 2011 Alumni Day

In a celebratory and emotional afternoon, the Silver School recognized six alumni at the third annual Alumni Awards Ceremony. The ceremony was held on Saturday, September 24, at the Dean’s Luncheon, part of NYU Alumni Day.

The Distinguished Alumni Award was given to:

Shirley J. Jones, MSW ’64, a distinguished professor emerita at the University of Albany. She has been a leader in the field of social work, including serving as founder and director of the US-Africa Partnership for Building Stronger Communities Project and as dean of the School of Social Work at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Samuel Rosenberg, MSW ’86, dean at the School of Social Science and Human Services at Ramapo College of New Jersey. Throughout his career, Rosenberg has made many contributions to the field through his scholarship and published works and his leadership in academia.

Jack Stein, MSW ’84, chief of the Prevention Branch at the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Stein has over 20 years of experience as a clinical social worker, community and professional educator, policy analyst, and research administrator, and has been a leading voice in the field of substance abuse.

Jane Eisner Bram, MSW ’79, PhD ’00, received the Make a Difference Award for her continuing support of NYU social work education. Bram’s generous support helped establish the School’s current center on Washington Square North, in thanks for which 2 Washington Square North—one of the three townhouses the School occupies—was named the Jane Eisner and William B. Bram House. A psychotherapist in private practice, she has been a key supporter of faculty research, student scholarships, and helping to enhance the School’s psychopharmacology curriculum, and is the founder of the SSSW Book Club.

“The opportunity to stay connected has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my professional life,” she said as she accepted the award. She noted that she felt “so blessed” to help others receive training at the School.

The lunch turned more somber as the School recognized two alumni—and faculty members—who died in 2010-11. Associate Professor Gladys González-Ramos, MSW ’77, PhD ’85, and Professor Jeffrey Seinfeld, PhD ’87, were both honored posthumously with the Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes outstanding teaching and dedication to students.

“Gladys was a dedicated teacher and mentor wherever she touched other human beings,” said Professor Trudy Festinger. “She had a lovely mind that was incisive and logical in approaching problems.”

In a touching speech, Ernesto Loperena, husband of González-Ramos, spoke of her many roles: therapist, teacher, and friend. He said, “For many of us, she was the compass of our lives.” She was also the daughter of a mother with Parkinson’s disease, which shaped González-Ramos’ work in the last decade of her life as she became a leader in the Parkinson’s community.

Adjunct Associate Professor Robert Berger called Seinfeld “one of our school’s gems.” He spoke of Seinfeld’s love of life, of the School, and of his writing. “His enthusiasm for his work was legendary and contagious.”

Also at the lunch, Professor Jean Anastas gave the keynote address on recent activities of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and laid out gender-related issues as a major theme for her NASW presidency, which began in July. Dean Lynn Videka opened the luncheon discussing the state of the School with the statement: “The School is thriving.” She discussed future goals of the School—such a rededication to diversity, building the School’s research infrastructure, and expanding engagement with the community—all in the School’s draft strategic plan.

The night before Alumni Day, faculty, alumni, and friends of the School gathered for the 1960 Committee Reception to recognize donors who gave $1,960 or more in honor of the School’s 50th Anniversary. A plaque was unveiled in the School’s parlor with names of 1960 Committee members, and three students were awarded scholarships: Tiffany Fogelson, MSW ’12; Imani Henry, MSW ’12; and PhD candidate Kate Maurer.
Shaping Drug Policy

Jack Stein, MSW ’84

“I have no regrets choosing a social work degree,” said Jack Stein. “It has allowed me to take advantage of an amazing number of professional opportunities that have come my way.”

Stein is currently the chief of the Prevention Branch in the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the recipient of the 2011 Silver School Distinguished Alumnus Award. He oversees implementation and monitoring of drug prevention activities that make up the Obama administration’s National Drug Control Strategy. A typical day can range from drafting a policy response to an urgent, emerging issue to meeting with some of the 30 plus federal agencies responsible for the on-the-ground implementation of drug prevention and treatment strategies.

Stein calls the Obama administration’s approach to drug prevention “balanced”—applying both public health and public safety models. “You can’t arrest your way out of the drug problem,” he explained. “Although law enforcement plays an important part, it’s only dealing with half the problem. Drug addiction is a chronic disease that can be both prevented and successfully treated.”

One big issue certain to affect both drug abuse service delivery and the social work profession over the next few years is health care reform. The Affordable Care Act recognizes substance use disorder services as an essential health benefit. As more individuals become insured, access to substance abuse services will increase. Since social workers already provide a variety of services related to the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, Stein said, “The profession is in a critical position to take a leadership role in the health care arena to make sure people get the necessary services they deserve.”

Stein’s career has included jobs as a therapist in a community mental health center and as the executive director of a community-based AIDS service organization. He has worked in the federal government for the past 15 years at agencies such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The change from clinical services to program administration to policy work has felt like a natural evolution. With his social work degree and clinical experience, Stein said he is able to think about policy issues from an individual, family, community, and national perspective. He would advise people interested in working in policy to take advantage of any practice-level experience offered during their social work education to help broaden their skill base.

“Working on a policy level may feel like a very slow process,” said Stein, reflecting on his career. “But when a new national initiative is launched that increases access to quality services for those in need, that’s pretty significant.”

Stein will be speaking at the December conference, Substance Use: Responding to Changes in Policy, Research, and Services, hosted by the School’s Division of Lifelong Learning and Professional Development. Learn more at: www.nyu.edu/socialwork/continuing.education/substanceuse.html
In Memoriam: Eda Goldstein

March 22, 1944 - June 21, 2011
Professor Emerita of Social Work

The Silver School of Social Work mourns the loss of Professor Emerita Eda Goldstein, who died unexpectedly on June 21. A psychotherapist, social worker, and prolific author, Goldstein is widely recognized as the foremost authority on the application of psychoanalytic theory to clinical social work practice.

Her professional interests included: ego psychology, self-psychology, and object relations theory; clinical practice; narcissistic and borderline disorders; mid-life issues and treatment; affirmative treatment models for lesbian clients; and practice research.

“Eda had an in-depth understanding of the most difficult problems human beings face,” said Helen Krackow, past president of the New York State Society for Clinical Social Work. “She was not afraid to tackle these issues, and she did it by developing the most sensitive techniques and interventions and shared them with everybody.”

Goldstein joined the Silver School faculty in 1981, and taught courses in contemporary psychodynamic theories and clinical social work practice in the MSW and PhD programs. During her time at the School, she served as director of the PhD program, chair of the social work practice curriculum area, and was actively involved in work funded by two National Institute of Mental Health Training Grants related to social work with the chronically mentally ill. She was the founder of the post-master’s certificate program in advanced clinical practice, serving as its program director until her death.

Lucille Spira, PhD ’84, knew Goldstein as a teacher and an advisor at the School, and later as a colleague and friend. “Her non-judgmental style and ability to make complex material user friendly fostered learning and participation from everyone. As an advisor, she was supportive, readily available, and willing to share her wide range of knowledge. She tried to empower her students, colleagues, and friends.”

Goldstein published extensively and her writings include books that are widely used in schools of social work and by practitioners across the country. Author of seven books, she was best known for the seminal text, *Ego Psychology and Social Work Practice*, first published in 1984. The book received widespread praise and has become required reading in many schools of social work. She was also a consulting editor to numerous social work journals, including the *Clinical Social Work Journal*.

“Eda Goldstein’s greatest contribution was to make psychoanalytic theories accessible to social work practitioners, particularly those working with the most vulnerable populations,” said Associate Professor Carol Tosone, editor-in-chief of the *Clinical Social Work Journal*. “Her professional legacy is immeasurable and the *Clinical Social Work Journal* is proud to have been a frequent recipient of her scholarship.”

Before joining the Silver School, Goldstein worked as a social work practitioner in mental health settings. She served as the assistant director for staff development of the Social Work Department of New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center’s Westchester Division, and she was co-principal investigator of several research projects on borderline disorders.

Goldstein was a distinguished scholar in the National Academy of Practice and chaired the licensing task force of the National Association of Social Workers’ New York Chapter. She received an AB in psychology and an AM in social work from the University of Chicago and a DSW from Columbia University. Goldstein is survived by partner of 24 years, Patricia Petrocelli, and her mother, brother, niece, and nephew.

A fund to support clinical social work at the Silver School has been created in Goldstein’s memory. Donations can be made to:
The Eda Goldstein Scholarship Fund at the Silver School of Social Work
Attn: Dean’s Office
1 Washington Square North
New York, NY 10003
New Leadership and Focus for NYU Silver’s Doctoral Program

The Silver School’s doctoral program welcomed six new students this fall, as well as new leadership and a renewed focus on research and empirical scholarship. Professor Vincent Guilamo-Ramos has been named the program’s director with Michael McCaw as assistant director.

“We are trying to position our graduates to be competitive candidates for faculty positions at leading schools of social work and for leadership positions within our profession. The renewed focus further enhances our research infrastructure and builds on the successes of previous doctoral chair Associate Professor Jim Martin, who embraced the program’s research mission,” explained Guilamo-Ramos.

New this year, every incoming student has been paired with a faculty mentor to enhance research training and foster career development. In addition, the doctoral program now relies more heavily on senior faculty for both classroom instruction and student research training. Faculty mentors are selected on solid track records of developing research programs; securing extramural funding; and publishing in top-tier, peer-reviewed journals. Throughout the program’s coursework phase, students complete 20 hours a week of a structured research practicum.

“Students are getting greater opportunities to learn specific skills to develop careers as independent social work investigators,” said Guilamo-Ramos. “They are being integrated into the School’s growing and significant portfolio of federally funded projects.”

The program has also created smaller, more intimate cohorts with increased attention to the financial needs of incoming students and greater admissions selectivity. Each new student receives guaranteed funding for the program’s coursework portion, including a tuition waiver, a competitive stipend, and health insurance. Increasingly, successfully admitted doctoral students demonstrate a clear commitment to research as a primary motivation for pursuing a PhD at Silver.

Guilamo-Ramos acknowledges that the doctoral program looks different than it did 10 or 20 years ago. “The profession, particularly in doctoral education, has evolved in its commitment to developing empirically informed knowledge, and our doctoral program reflects this broader trend.”

The following students are members of the 2011 entering doctoral class:

- **Rosa J. Cho** has over a decade of experience in women’s human rights advocacy, both in grassroots and international human rights settings. Her research interests are intimate partner violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and poverty and socioeconomic justice. Mentor: Professor Wen-Jui Han

- **Kevin Lotz** is the founder and director of Trinity Place, a transitional shelter for homeless LGBTQ youth in New York City. His research interests are focused on the intersection of three inter-related areas: poverty, mental health/trauma, and addictions/substance abuse, particularly as they converge in the criminal justice and incarceration systems. Mentor: Professor Vincent Guilamo-Ramos

- **Andrea Cole** is a social worker with a background in mental health practice and research, as well as international social work. Her research interests include child and adolescent mental health, trauma interventions, evidence-based practice, and treatment engagement with youth immigrants and refugees. Mentor: Associate Professor Michelle Munson

- **Besa H. Bauta** is a research analyst with Catholic Guardian Society and Home Bureaus, Program and Support Services-Research Division. Her research interests focus on outcomes for youth in out-of-home care; traumatology among migrant, immigrant, and refugee populations; and global mental health. Mentor: Professor Deborah Padgett

- **Mandy McGuire-Schwartz** has worked in the children’s mental health field, as a clinician and program coordinator at a child guidance clinic. Her primary research interests involve exploring factors that contribute to resiliency and posttraumatic growth among children and families. Mentor: Professor Mary McKay

- **Gabriel Robles** has research interests that include HIV/AIDS and STI prevention, stigma-related sexual health and education, and other health disparities faced by African-American, Latino, and LGBT families. Mentor: Professor Guilamo-Ramos
My Expanded View of Social Work

Rebecca Hoberman, MSW ’12

I grew up in a family that taught me to pursue social justice with all I have. When I walked into the Silver School of Social Work last year, I was excited to do just that by becoming a clinical social worker and connecting to the values of the profession with my client work!

During my first year, I was introduced to an expanded view of social work. In my Social Welfare Policy and Programs class, the instructor shared his social work practice in the political arena. He brought in social workers who were employed in positions within government and elected officials’ offices. I had thought that social work happened exclusively in a clinical setting and was intrigued by what I heard. I wanted to better understand how social change happens from within government, so my instructor arranged a summer internship for me working with State Senator Tom Duane.

The experience was amazing. I was immediately sent into the field with his staff to organize and empower communities around important issues such as the preservation and creation of affordable housing. I was continually amazed at how responsive city agencies and other organizations were to an inquiry made by a representative from the senator’s office. The senator was an inspiration, and working with his office I was able to make a difference in people’s lives by advocating for their needs.

Although these worlds are not traditionally thought of as interconnected, I found a strong and natural relationship between social work practice and political advocacy. With my new understanding of these systems, I find myself drawn to work in government to hone these skills. I look forward to joining many Silver alumni in a career in public service.

Rebecca Hoberman

Class Notes

Jennifer Bronsnick, MSW ’03, is in private practice and the founder of www.MindfulMommy.com, a website that offers community and support for high-risk mothers around the country.

Yvette Colón, PhD ’07, is a full-time lecturer at Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work and consults with the MetaCancer Foundation.

Yvette Santos Cuenco, MSW ’06, began a new post in August 2011 as a school counselor at Tashkent International School in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. She previously worked as a therapist at the Jewish Board of Family and Children’s Services Montague/IHB Day Treatment program.

Lori Hiller, MSW ’90, has been a New York City Public School social worker since 2007 in two Brooklyn elementary schools. She counsels students individually and in groups; supports classroom teachers; and runs parent workshops dealing with independence and separation, sex education, and working through divorce.

Jim Oher, MSW ’77, is an intervention coach leading a firm providing coherent strategic counsel focusing on collaboration, conflict, and resiliency.

Jeff Palladino, MSW ’00, is an assistant principal at Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School for the New York City Department of Education and is supervising his 12th NYU Silver School of Social Work intern.

Ilona Pollack-Levine, MSW ’85, is the primary clinician, Geriatric Unit, at Yale Psychiatric Hospital, New Haven, Connecticut. She is also a consultant to a documentary filmmaker on mid-life and aging issues.

Roxana Tetenbaum, MSW ’06, has been named Henry Street Settlement’s coordinator of advocacy and community resources. She will lead the organization’s advocacy efforts and foster community education on local, state, and federal policy issues.

My-Lan Tran, MSW ’92, is the manager for LANtern (Lupus Asian Network) at Hospital for Special Surgery, a national support and education program for Asian Americans living with lupus and their loved ones. She is also co-chair for the Asian American Social Work Task Force at the NASW-NYC Chapter.

Steven Winderbaum, MSW ’90, is currently vice president of quality improvement for Magellan Health Services. He utilizes the skills gained at NYU to determine and measure innovative methods for clinical and administrative behavioral health service delivery in support of health care reform.

In Memoriam

Annette Cardona, MSW ’01, died on August 3, 2011, from complications related to lung cancer.

Robin Schindler, a Silver School faculty advisor since 2008, died on August 4, 2011, after a brief struggle with cancer.
Thank You Silver School Supporters

This honor roll acknowledges NYU Silver’s loyal givers and recognizes contributions made by generous donors in the 2010-11 fiscal year. Your investment helps make it possible for Silver School students to earn a quality education that allows them to make a positive difference in the world. Thank you for supporting NYU Silver, and we hope we can continue to count on your gifts in 2011-12.

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