NYU Silver Hosts East China Normal University for a Research Conference

“This is not just a bridge between NYU and Shanghai, but a bridge that utilizes the assets of the Global Network University of NYU.”

These words from New York University President John Sexton kicked off a two-day conference between the NYU Silver School of Social Work and the East China Normal University (ECNU) School of Social Development (SSD)—a major step in the development of the NYU-ECNU Social Work and Social Policy Research Institute.

The Institute will serve as a nexus for social work research projects and educational programs between the two universities; will provide on-the-job trainings to social workers; and will host regular seminars, workshops, and conferences.

Over April 19 and 20, the schools learned more about each other’s academic programs and research, and built an agenda for the Institute’s work. Five faculty members and the dean of ECNU SSD visited New York for the conference. This was the fourth meeting for the schools, but the first in New York.

NYU will open its newest portal campus in Shanghai in fall 2013 with ECNU as its partner. China holds particular importance for the social work profession as its government has embarked on a national initiative to increase the country’s number of social workers tenfold over the next decade.

ECNU SSD Dean Jinhong Ding explained that the profession is still in its infancy in China. While ECNU SSD has been around for decades, the social work program only dates back to 2009. “As far as social work is concerned, we are just on the way of becoming and exploring.”

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Professor Wen Jun, co-director of the Research Institute with NYU Silver Professor Wen-Jui Han, noted that the Chinese government views social work as an administrative function and few in the profession have formal training. Low salaries, a lack of uniform professional standards, and a limited number of social work education programs pose challenges if the government wants to reach its goal of 3 million social workers by 2020. Jun envisions this collaboration with NYU will be an important impetus to address these issues. “I’m still very hopeful for the future of social work in China.”

The conference’s first day addressed research with a focus on the current context of social work in China and the United States, as well as the future direction of the profession. Topics examined included mentoring youth and adolescents; rural identity and urbanization; marriage and fertility among first-generation families under China’s one-child policy; and poverty and social economic development in a global context.

The second day examined educational curriculum, and included a discussion about collaborative partnerships between the School and local agencies. Attendees from leaders at New York local social service organizations participated in discussions; ECNU faculty members also visited the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center, University Settlement, and Midtown Community Court on April 18.

The schools left the conference with a commitment to focus the Institute’s research on the areas of migration and immigration, children and families, and aging. The Institute will employ a comparative study framework to guide research—examining issues in the United States and China or New York and Shanghai. Faculty members from both schools will be involved in working groups to discuss future projects.

During the opening remarks of the conference, Dean Lynn Videka noted the interdisciplinary research aspect in social sciences. “We want to be synergistic, collaborative in our education programs, learn more about each other and create a path for partnership.” NYU Silver intends to involve faculty from other NYU schools to help ensure interdisciplinary research.

On the education side, the schools decided to establish an English-language MSW program in Shanghai and a PhD program. China currently does not have a social work doctoral program. The schools will also develop a train-the-trainer program to teach social work instructors, as many have never worked as social workers.

Said Han of the Silver School, “With this Institute, and with poverty and inequality issues dear to our hearts, we are embarking on a historical collaborative journey to bring together scholars from both universities and different disciplines to produce research and practice evidence that can be used to shape practice and policy responses.”
A Letter from the Dean

Dear alumni and friends:

As we close the 2011-12 academic year, I am delighted to report on some of the School’s progress. First, congratulations to the 621 students we graduated from our baccalaureate, MSW, and PhD programs. This year’s convocation was truly inspiring. Dennis Walcott, chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, served as convocation speaker.

Over the course of the year, our research infrastructure has strengthened and our research centers—McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research and the Center for Latino Adolescent and Family Health—have secured federally funded grants, hosted events and lecture series, and produced original research and publications. Additionally, the Silver School has partnered with the NYU Center on Violence and Recovery, a relationship you will read more about in the pages of this newsletter. We are also building our programs with NYU-Shanghai. NYU Silver faculty have collaborated with faculty at East China Normal University to establish the NYU-ECNU Social Work and Social Policy Research Institute to secure our educational and research presence at NYU Shanghai’s campus. You can read more about this initiative and our recent conference in the cover story of this issue.

Silver students, alumni, and faculty are changing the world in impressive ways. In this newsletter you will read about projects in Tanzania, Guatemala, and the Philippines. I hope you will enjoy reading about these impressive initiatives.

After a two-year strategic planning initiative, we are ready to present the School’s plan, Looking Forward: New Directions for the Silver School of Social Work. This will guide the School over the next five years and positions us for excellence in the vital and challenging world of social work practice, education, and research. We will be emailing a copy of the final report to our alumni, and it will be posted on our website, www.socialwork.nyu.edu.

Best wishes for a relaxing summer,

Lynn Videka
Dean and Professor

Your gift of any size allows us to strive for excellence.

Your gift inspires fellow alumni, friends, corporations, and foundations to invest in NYU Silver.

Your gift increases access to NYU Silver for more students.

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NYU Silver
25 West 4th Street, Suite 403
New York, NY 10012
The Center on Violence and Recovery Partners with NYU Silver

As the NYU Silver School of Social Work continues to build its research portfolio, the School is forging a deeper relationship with the Center on Violence and Recovery (CVR), founded by Professor Linda Mills. CVR works to advance knowledge of the causes and consequences of violence and trauma, and develop solutions that foster healing among individuals, families, and communities.

“We, at the Silver School, are committed to values such as a belief in the dignity and worth of all individuals,” said CVR Executive Director Linda Mills, who also serves NYU as senior vice provost for undergraduates in the Global Network University. “These beliefs are also core to what we do at CVR.”

The Center, established in 2004, develops cutting-edge solutions to promote healing and transformation; conducts research studies on critical issues connected to trauma and restoration; and offers trainings, workshops, and lectures on topics related to trauma and healing.

Earlier this year, the National Institute of Justice awarded Mills and Briana Barocas, director of research at CVR, a $275,000 grant to compare treatment approaches for domestic violence offenders. The study, in collaboration with Professor Rob Butters at the University of Utah, will examine the effectiveness of the standard treatment to domestic violence in the United States (Batterer Intervention) to two alternative treatments: a restorative justice approach (Circles of Peace) and a conjoint treatment approach (Couple Conflict Group), for intimate partner violence cases where the victim is willing to participate in treatment with the offender. Both alternative approaches will be provided after the offender attends a traditional 12-week Batterer Intervention program.

This study complements a 2010 National Science Foundation-funded randomized controlled trial—currently underway in Salt Lake City—comparing arrest outcomes of offenders after participating in one of the three treatment approaches. Previous work by Mills and Barocas in Nogales, Arizona, has suggested that restorative justice is a viable and safe option for domestic violence offenders.

“Acknowledging that each couple or family has a unique dynamic and attempting to address the root causes of violence gives participants a sense of involvement and investment in the treatment, and this is atypical to many of the treatments in practice today,” explained Mills.

CVR addresses a range of violence and trauma—from domestic abuse to community violence to mass atrocities. With a grant from the Task Force on International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, CVR is measuring the effectiveness of different delivery modes of Holocaust and genocide information, including moving and still images, media representation, and video games. The goal is to determine which type of information most influences young people and encourages them to prevent future genocides. The project, titled Messaging to Remember, will contain a digital component to help determine how the technology can enhance Holocaust and genocide education.

“At CVR we challenge the boundaries on issues related to trauma and violence,” said Mills. “We are dedicated to working in partnership with communities to develop and implement interventions that encourage and help those who have experienced violence to look frankly at the dynamic of violence and draw on resources, such as family, friends, cultural ties, and spiritual beliefs, to heal.”
Improving Young Lives in Tanzania

Chris Gates, BS ’09

Chris Gates’ passion for his work comes through clearly over a broken-up call from the African bush. Gates is the executive director of The Janada Batchelor Foundation for Children (JBFC), an organization working to alleviate extreme rural poverty.

“It’s an interesting life in general—a livelihood and a lifestyle,” he said. “You live and work in the same place and it’s 24/7, but I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

That place is the small village of Kitongo, Tanzania, where JBFC’s 50-acre campus sits on the shores of Lake Victoria. JBFC uses a four-pronged approach to help youth out of poverty and develop their leadership skills. The organization provides housing for orphaned or abandoned girls, offers primary and secondary education for boys and girls, teaches rural economic development through an agriculture and livestock program, and partners with the government to provide access to quality healthcare.

Gates’ interest in East Africa began as a child. When Gates turned 15, his grandmother—for whom JBFC is named—agreed to take him on safari as long as he promised to perform community service in Tanzania as part of their month-long trip.

Gates volunteered at a boys’ home, and what started out as a way to see African wildlife turned into his “aha moment.” He kept in touch with the boys’ home director and returned to volunteer for several summers. But, Gates soon realized the limitations of many organizations, which reach a targeted population or have a narrow focus.

“When looking at the greater issue of poverty, I only saw holistic care as a solution,” he explained. “I really think you have to tackle a multitude of issues to make real, sustainable, long-term change.”

Founded by Gates when he was an undergraduate student at the NYU Silver School of Social Work, JBFC launched with its home for girls and farm and livestock program. Once Gates graduated and moved to Kitongo, the program grew into its current incarnation. The campus houses 40 girls, and hosts a school enrolling over 300 primary and secondary students.

The organization follows a self-sustainable business model. The vegetables, rice, and beans grown on the farm and livestock raised teach students about agriculture, bring in revenue, and feed pupils. The organization is working to create long-term infrastructure, such as a medical clinic, for the local community. JBFC also employs over 40 people from local villages.

When the primary school opened in 2010, it enrolled 250 students and had a waitlist of 600 within one week. The school’s three buses travel 20 miles away to pick up students for an 8:00 am school start.

“The community has been extremely responsive and taken on the organization and everything we do,” he said. “It’s been incredible to see and why we’ve been so successful.”

Gates has plans to build a second campus an hour and a half away from Kitongo. Ultimately, he hopes to expand into multiple 50-acre campuses across Tanzania and other East African countries. “We’ve been very successful in this community, and we feel our model can adapt.”

Asked what he finds most rewarding about his work, he answers: the transformation he sees in the children and community. In addition, no two days are the same. “There’s a uniqueness to this job and every day you do not know what is ahead of you. It’s exciting and adventurous, and I love that aspect.”

Learn more about JBFC at www.jbfc-online.org.
Fulfilling a Need for PELC Leadership

The NYU Silver School of Social Work has long been a leader in the field of palliative and end-of-life care. The School offers training across the career trajectory through the Zelda Foster Studies Program in Palliative and End-of-Life Care. A new 18-month fellowship in social work PELC leadership—funded by The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Inc. and the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation—provides training, mentorship, and a capstone program. The 14 Leadership Fellows have at least five years of post-master’s PELC experience, and work in New York City hospices, hospitals, and nursing homes.

Q. Why does the new fellowship focus on PELC leadership?
A. The impetus comes from those of us who are in leadership positions and are now beginning to look towards retirement. We want to develop a cadre of well-trained social workers to meet the increasing demand for leaders across the health care continuum as the population ages and we face a social work shortage in oncology and palliative care.

Q. What does the School have to offer that makes this program unique?
A. The Silver School knows how to best teach this material due to the long history of our post-master’s certificate program. Our faculty have lengthy careers in palliative care and teach from a relational perspective, which creates a safe learning environment. One unique aspect is

Learning to Love Research

Chequet Ching, MSW ’12

In my first conversation with Dr. Robert Leibson Hawkins outside of class, I told him simply that I was not interested in research. He had approached me to work with him on several of his projects, but it all seemed very vague and sitting in an office was decidedly not a part of my social work plan. I might have also mentioned to him that writing was my own personal source of torture. It was the second semester of my first year in the MSW program, and I was feeling a bit dramatic. Of course, I understood the value of research, and was curious about others’ findings. I just wasn’t sure if it was something that I wanted to do.

It turns out that beyond his abilities as a supportive professor, Dr. Hawkins can be quite the salesman. Before I knew it, I was writing up a literature review about middle school depression as a predictor of high school dropout. Then, I was looking into barriers to permanent housing for people transitioning out of shelters, and the relationship between cumulative trauma and poverty. I have looked at international poverty statistics, as well as population and poverty data for several southern cities for Dr. Hawkins’ research on reverse migration, and I am now learning how to manage data through SPSS.

Over the last semester, we have been preparing for a community health needs assessment project in the Philippines. Dr. Hawkins has developed a curriculum for a study abroad program this summer, through which he will be traveling with a group of social work students to Del Carmen, a small town in the Philippines with a poverty rate of 68 percent and an unemployment rate of nearly 50 percent. There, we will be collaborating with local students, community members, and government officials to develop an assessment of their current needs through interviews and the use of photography. The Mayor’s Office of Del Carmen is hoping to use the needs assessment to determine how the community members can create and utilize local resources, both economically and educationally, to better serve their families and children.

Working with Dr. Hawkins has provided me with an opportunity that I didn’t think I would want or, even more surprisingly, need. In addition to learning about the specifics of his research, this work has allowed me to stay connected to a broader perspective that provides context for the clinical work that fills our coursework and field placement hours. Although I enrolled at Silver for its clinical focus, it is often too easy to become isolated by individual stories and presenting problems. Touching base with Dr. Hawkins’ work helps me to maintain a sense of balance, to stay grounded as a clinician within a social justice framework. So, here I am. A research assistant.

Chequet Ching graduated in May from the MSW/MA child development dual-degree program offered with Sarah Lawrence College.

Clinical Associate Professor Susan Gerbino, who directs the Zelda Foster Studies Program, recently sat down with the Newsletter.

Q. What does the School have to offer that makes this program unique?
A. The Silver School knows how to best teach this material due to the long history of our post-master’s certificate program. Our faculty have lengthy careers in palliative care and teach from a relational perspective, which creates a safe learning environment. One unique aspect is
Job Turnover in Assembly Factories

When Americans go to their favorite department stores to buy a new piece of clothing, is any thought given to where the clothes are made or the employee labor conditions? For some people, factories in Central America may be far from their minds when browsing through a rack of shirts.

Professor Liliana Goldín hopes to change that. She has spent her career studying economic strategies indigenous Maya populations have used to cope with little land and poverty. In a recent paper published in *Latin American Research Review*, she examines employee turnover in clothing factories in the Guatemalan Highlands and its effect on individuals and their families. She looked at two types of turnover: involuntary, where workers are fired or factories are closed, and voluntary, where employees choose to stop working.

These factories—called *maquilas* in Guatemala—assemble clothing for big brands like the Gap, Liz Claiborne, and Walmart, and then export them tax free to the United States and Europe. Young Maya women make up 60 to 70 percent of the maquila workforce. Labor conditions are very difficult—long hours; minimal food and water breaks; few bathrooms for hundreds of workers with little time to use them; and intimidating bosses. Additionally, these jobs prevent women from furthering their education.

Why do women take these jobs? Factory positions provide a steady paycheck and more money than agricultural jobs. Additionally, Goldín found factory employment provides women with a feeling of independence at home.

“One of the advantages is that for the first time, as they bring money home, the men around these women are appreciative, and they are attributing these women with higher status by the fact that they are making money,” she said.

Even with the benefits factory employment yields, the harsh work takes its toll. "I originally assumed that workers had fewer options than they actually had," said Goldín. “However, turnover was not found to be dictated by industry alone or helpless reactions to the forces of capital and markets. While such dynamics are operative, I also found that turnover was a choice by youth to take hold of their lives and to cope with the harsh working conditions by getting a needed break.”

Goldín used a quantitative, three-wave longitudinal survey of 450 households and open-ended interviews to document factory turnover rates over one year. The survey assessed attitudes towards industrial and other available jobs and general household characteristics of factory workers, including health indicators and support networks.

Close to 80 percent of turnover was found to be related to voluntary decisions to stop working. Explained Goldín, “Maquila workers often ceased working when they needed rest from extended exploitation, harsh treatment, and extreme overwork. In their own accounts and in responses to the large-scale survey, workers told us how they used turnover to cope with a bad labor situation.” In the end, however, these breaks are only temporary—lasting a few months—and women often return to factories because the income is sorely needed and the work represents some of the available best jobs.

Goldín noted that her research is an attempt to understand the ways the international division of labor in global capitalism structures the lives of people and communities in areas often considered peripheral to the world economy. “I want to show how consumers’ lives in developed countries are tied to some of the most impoverished communities of the world, and to increase awareness of the labor dynamics and labor conditions experienced by the mostly young workers who make our clothes.”

Seen at Silver

Students dance the evening away at the **5th Annual Silver Ball**. held on February 11 and organized by the Graduate Student Association.

Alumni gathered in the School’s Parlor for conversation and appetizers at the **Recent Alumni Happy Hour** on March 9.

Doctoral students John Hannigan and Soyoung Park chat at the Fall 2011 **Doctoral Student Association Social**.

Fred Ssewamala, associate professor at Columbia University School of Social Work, speaks at the first lecture of the **McSilver Spring Lecture Series** on February 2, hosted by the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research.

The Chinese Student Support Group celebrates receiving the Outstanding Student Program Award at the **4th Annual Student Awards** in April.
2011-12
Student Awards

Congratulations to the Silver School’s talented students and student groups who were honored this year with awards from the School and University. Recipients of NYU Silver awards were recognized at the School’s 4th Annual Student Awards reception on April 18.

Silver Spirit Award, NYU Silver
Elizabeth Fritz, BS ’12
Geoffrey Golia, MSW ’12

Global Social Work Award, NYU Silver
Cayce Pack, BS ’12

Silver Citizenship Award, NYU Silver
Hector “Angel” Charriez, BS ’13

Social Justice Award, NYU Silver
Regina Diouf, MSW ’12
Lauren Kalogridis, BS ’13
Evelyn Orellana, MSW ’12

Dean’s Award for Innovation in Social Work Practice, NYU Silver
Ian Chorao, MSW ’13
Sarah Fjeldstad, BS ’12
Clara Loeffel, MSW ’12

Outstanding Student Program, NYU Silver
Chinese Student Support Group

Diane Greenstein Memorial Fellowship, NYU Silver
Maya Doyle, PhD Candidate

Robert Moore Award for Excellence in Scholarship, NYU Silver
Jennifer Bawwns, PhD ’12

Outstanding POPS Project Award, NYU Silver
Judith Rosen, MSW ’13 – “Respect the Hustle”

President’s Service Award, New York University
Michael T. Embrey, BS ’12
Geoffrey M. Golia, MSW ’12
Dorene Ng, BS ’12
Evelyn J. Orellana, MSW ’12
Undergraduate Student Government Association

Class Notes

In March, Rachelle Butt, MSW ’08, returned from a 6-month stay in Israel where she worked with at-risk youth at Crossroads Jerusalem and developed and implemented a group curriculum about body image for young women. She recently began a new job providing therapy to children and adolescents in the Intensive Crisis Stabilization and Treatment Program at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn.

Judy Ciacci, MSW ’10, has launched an online coaching practice via Skype for those suffering from issues with food and body image. She also writes a blog reflecting on mindful eating at www.beingandeating.com.

Mary Pat Draddy, MSW ’06, is an administrator at Camp Viva, a program of Family Services of Westchester. Camp Viva is a one-week HIV/AIDS camp for individuals and families living in Westchester and the Bronx.

Something Spectacular: The True Story of a Rockette’s Battle with Bulimia by Greta Gleissner, MSW ’10, has just been published by Seal Press.

Allison Gold, MSW ’96, is admissions coordinator at Callen-Lorde Community Health Center focusing on the LGBT population. She has a private practice specializing in adoption issues, couples, and depression.

Belinda Housebold Seiger, PhD ’05, has relocated back to the New York area after living in Florida for over eight years. She is currently the founding director of the Momentum Center for Psychotherapy and Great Potential Family Coaching.

Noah Kass, MSW ’08, works as the clinical director at the Realization Center, one of the largest substance abuse treatment centers in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Noah is an MSNBC contributor on The Dylan Ratigan Show and author of the “Ask Noah” column on TheStreet.com.

Willie Maye, MSW ’92, is the administrative director of social services for NYC Administration for Children’s Services - Division of Administration: Office of Personnel Services. He is the executive director of Man Up, a 10-week Rite of Passage and mentoring program designed to help boys 8-to-18 years old to be responsible, disciplined men.

Claudia Oberweger, MSW ’88, continues to run groups and counsel individuals, couples, and families who are dealing with alcoholism/addictions and other issues. She provides private supervision to social work interns and CASAC eligible counselors. Additionally, she participates on the Dean’s Council at the NYU Silver School of Social Work.

Ann Marie Petrocelli, MSW ’05, has written the book Prejudice to Pride: Moving from Homophobia to Acceptance, published by NASW Press.

Send class notes to ssw.alumni@nyu.edu.
Faculty Awards and Honors

Professor Deborah Padgett has been named to the board of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, which recognizes outstanding social work scholars.

Professor Deborah Padgett has been awarded the 2011-12 Distinguished Teaching Award, acknowledging outstanding tenure and clinical faculty with at least 10 years of NYU service.

Associate Professor Carol Tosone was appointed to the International Advisory Board of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths-Based Practice.

Professor Shulamith Lala Straussner has been honored with the establishment of The Straussner/ journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions Doctoral Dissertation Award, to be given annually for best social work dissertation in the field of addictions.

NYU Silver Professor Suzanne England and Associate Professor of English Martha Rust have been awarded a $25,000 National Endowment of the Humanities grant to support the development of their undergraduate course on memory and forgetting.

The National Institute of Alcohol and Alcohol Abuse awarded Professors James Jaccard and Vincent Guilamo-Ramos a three-year award of $3.5 million for their research on underage drinking in Latino youth.

The New York Community Trust awarded Robert Hawkins, the McSilver Assistant Professor in Poverty Studies, a $78,000 grant to implement a workforce development program for low-income victims of domestic violence. The award supports Hawkins’ work under NYU Silver’s McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research.

Associate Professor Michelle Munson and Professor James Jaccard have been awarded a $35,000, one-year grant from the Ohio Department of Mental Health to develop a psychosocial intervention expressly designed to improve young adults’ intention to use and their actual use of mental health services.

Assistant Professor Darcey Merritt will attend the week-long National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect Summer Research Institute at Cornell University in June.

The School’s Zelda Foster Studies Program in Palliative and End-of-Life Care has received two new grants for 2012-13: $50,000 from the Jewish Foundation for Education of Women and $50,000 from the 291 Foundation. The program also received two $25,000 grants from the Lucius Littauer Foundation for 2012.

Faculty Publications


