

Students present, "Change Agent Projects" at the Field Program Student Poster Symposium earlier this year.



CONNECTIONS

SANDRA ROSENBAUM SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK Alumni Magazine | 2025



Sandra Rosenbaum
School of Social Work
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



As I look back on this past year at the Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work, I am struck by the resilience, creativity, and care that define our school and community. These are challenging times for our students, faculty, staff, the social work profession, and society writ large. And yet, the work of preparing the next generation of social workers continues with purpose, hope, and a growing sense of urgency.

Amid these broader challenges, we remain focused on supporting our students in every way we can. One of the most pressing concerns our students raised in our annual survey is increasing stress and mental health challenges. Thanks to a generous donor, we recently hired an embedded counselor, who provides twelve hours of services to our students each week. It is already clear that this resource is making a real difference.

This has also been a year of transition. Alongside welcoming one of the largest fall incoming full-time MSW cohorts in recent years, we also welcomed the final cohort of Generalist students to our Part-Time MSW program. We have initiated a phased suspension of admissions to the Part-Time MSW program. Full discontinuation is scheduled following the graduation of the final cohort in 2029. Admissions will remain open through Fall 2027 for applicants who qualify for Advanced Standing. We are proud of the many students who earned their MSW through this pathway, and we have ensured that students currently in the program will continue to have the resources and support they need to complete their degrees.

Even with these changes and despite budget cuts, we continue to invest in innovative student training. This year, we are launching Rosenbaum Deep Dives, a series of workshops that allow students to explore emerging practice areas, along with investments in applied skills training to ensure our MSW graduates are ready for the growing demands of social work practice.

I am also mindful of broader shifts shaping access to graduate education. Upcoming changes to federal student loan programs will make it tougher for many graduate students to finance their degrees. While our tuition remains among the most affordable among our national peers, and we are fortunate to have grown our scholarship base over the past decade, this reality makes scholarships more essential than ever. Donor support ensures our students can fully invest in their education and training and, in turn, in the communities they will serve.

Many of you know from experience that social work can be demanding even in the best of times, and those demands only grow heavier when the world feels uncertain, leaving even seasoned social workers stretched thin. In moments like these, I think back to what I shared with our graduates at May commencement: "Things can be different. But it requires all of us not to get jaded, bitter, hopeless, or numb to the injustices of the world. So, find your people, your community, the ones you can depend on to lift you up when things are heavy." That reminder is as much for us as it is for them.

I wish each of you the gift of a community that sustains, supports, and celebrates you. Thank you for being part of ours.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marci Ybarra".

Marci Ybarra, MSW, PhD

Director & Professor, Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work

CONNECTIONS

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OUR AMAZING STUDENTS

MORE THAN 400 STUDENTS, all with unique qualifications and experiences, make up our four programs (BA/BS, BSW, MSW, and PhD). It would be impossible to highlight all. Here are a few examples of their stories.

From Ghana to the School of Social Work

Queen Liza Aboyah (featured on cover) was born and raised in Ghana where she witnessed first-hand stigmatization and other challenges faced by individuals confronted with mental illness and substance abuse in her community, coupled with a lack of resources available to these individuals. Inspired by her father, a social worker, Queen did her undergraduate work at the University of Ghana and completed her MSW degree in May 2025. Queen's long-term goal is to become a compassionate and effective mental health practitioner and make a meaningful difference in the lives of people with mental health challenges in Ghana and the world at large.

Grant Supports Student's Social Justice Book Club

During her BSW field placement Cece Babat helped sustain a parent-child reading program at the Brown County Jail in Green Bay. There, incarcerated parents choose an age-appropriate book and recorded their reading of the story. Then, the recording and a copy of the book were sent to their child. Drawing on that experience, Cece

received a grant from The Public Humanities Exchange Program to create a book club for 8th graders to early high school students focused on social justice literature. The club provides students with the opportunity to come together and discuss how systems of privilege and oppression are impacting their lives and the world around them.

Chikara Crooks Receives UW's Outstanding Returning Student Award

Chikara Crooks grew up in a single-parent home as the oldest of three children. She helped care for her siblings and, after becoming a parent herself right out of high school, was determined to provide her son with a better life. After working in the medical field and receiving her associate degree, she transferred to UW-Madison in 2022 where she became passionate about health equity and health promotion. Now in our MSW program, Chikara explains, "My son is my inspiration to keep going. I want to provide all the best for him, and I want to be able to help people holistically, providing resources that I wish I would have had throughout my life. I also hope that young girls who look like me will see me in my professional roles and know they can achieve their goals."

Women's Hockey Star Balances Winning a National Championship and Her Social Work Education

The Badgers Women's Hockey Team won the 2025 NCAA Championship. Social work undergraduate major Laila Edwards was one of the team's star players. In fact, in the semifinal game against the Minnesota Gophers, she scored a "hat trick" (a rare occurrence, scoring three goals in one game). Anyone who has played competitive college sports knows how challenging it is to focus on their sport and their education. While not yet certain about the specific focus of her studies, Laila is committed to the helping professions and to helping people achieve their hopes, dreams, and aspirations. (A feature of Laila can be found on our Instagram account.)



They Rowed (yes rowed!) Across the Pacific Ocean

PhD student Taylan Stulting, with their three-person mixed-gender team, ("Oar the Rainbow"), successfully rowed across the Pacific Ocean this summer. Their 2800-mile journey from Monterey, CA to the Hawaiian Island of Kauai was part of the annual World's Toughest Row – Pacific. With no help from other vessels, no motors or sails, they rowed two hours on, two hours off, 24-hours a day carrying all their supplies during the 37-day journey. Taylan, the first out transgender person in history to complete the journey explained, "We all have the power and responsibility to build a safer, more inclusive, and equitable world." As part of their efforts, they raised funds for Athlete Ally, an organization which "believes that everyone should have equal access, opportunity, and experience in sports – regardless of your sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression," and Doctors Without Borders.





CHANGE AGENT PROJECTS ENHANCE STUDENTS' MEZZO AND MACRO SKILLS

IN A RECENT SURVEY, 70% of our students indicated they planned to focus their social work education at the micro level (individuals, families, and small groups). While clearly worthy, one key component of the social work profession and our program is to ensure that students understand the importance of, and have the skills to, intervene at the mezzo and macro levels of practice as well. Having the knowledge and skills to make change at the community, agency, local, and societal levels is a hallmark of social work education.

An exciting and meaningful way the school fosters these skills is through the yearlong Change Agent Project, in which all students in field seminars and field placements participate. While change agent projects vary in interest and scope, students work in partnership with agency supervisors and community partners to develop and implement projects that focus on:

- Developing or enhancing knowledge, skills, and values regarding a mezzo or macro change effort.
- Utilizing the planned change process.
- Learning roles and intervention involved in change efforts.
- Completing and evaluating, to the extent possible, a change effort that is effective, efficient and sustainable.
- Developing and enhancing knowledge, skills, and values regarding working in teams.

Audrey Conn, Director of the Field Education Program explains, "These projects capture the collaboration between the school and community, the true vision of the Wisconsin Idea, and the importance of social work field education."

The culmination of students' change agent efforts is our Spring Agency Supervisor Workshop and Student Symposium, bringing together hundreds of students, agency supervisors, students, faculty, and community members to view and discuss project process and implementation. Students share professionally printed posters (thanks to funds provided by alumni who donate to our annual fund) which outline their efforts and impact.



SCHOOL PROVIDES LEADERSHIP FOR UNIVERSITY-WIDE CERTIFICATE IN AGING STUDIES

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANT NEED for increasing the number of trained professionals working with older adults, the school is coordinating a university-wide undergraduate Certificate in Aging Studies. The certificate will have its own interdisciplinary governing committee, chaired by social work Clinical Assistant Professor Jaime Goldberg, with membership from a diverse group of departments. In social work alone, 55,000 geriatric social workers are needed – a number projected to double by 2050. Currently, only five percent of social workers focus their training on working with older adults. Similar disparities between need and professionals trained to meet the need follow in other fields.

Courses will focus on approaching aging biologically, psychologically, and socially in the context of the individual and society and will better prepare students for later roles in health care, social services, policy making, and community organizations. Students will choose courses from multiple departments to best fit with their plan of study in consultation with their advisors.

In addition to marketable skills and professional preparation, the Certificate in Aging Studies helps expand the cultural understanding of working with and caring for older adults from a burden to a rewarding, even joyful privilege. One of the learning outcomes of the certificate is to identify and dispel commonly held myths and stereotypes regarding older adults and aging.

As Goldberg explains, "Many [students who took Social Issues and Aging] said, 'You know, this helps me to understand my grandparents better and what they're going through. This helps me to have more self-awareness and patience and empathy when I'm in a grocery store, and somebody in front of me in line is taking too long to count out their change.'"

The School of Social Work is well-positioned to coordinate the certificate and address the growing need to interest and train students to work with older adults. Former School Director, Stephanie Robert explains, "There were a confluence of factors

that made the timing right to pursue our school taking lead on the aging certificate. We have always had a strong group of faculty doing research related to aging – consistently more gerontological faculty than perhaps any other school of social work across the country.”



RACIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE ENTERS ITS 12TH YEAR

“POSSIBILITY! HOPE! This made my year so far – it really gave me hope and encouraged me to look for ways to engage vs. being depressed/frightened or apathetic. And even if fearful, the importance of not being silent.”

– Conference Attendee

PERHAPS NOW more than ever, the school’s efforts to bring content about racial justice to our students, professional social workers, and the community at-large is crucial. Over the past 11 years, the Social Workers Confronting Racial Injustice Conference has reached thousands of participants in Wisconsin, the nation, and even across the globe. Teachers, at all levels, use recorded content in classes, practitioners draw on resources and insights and expertise shared, colleagues watch together, discuss, reflect, and work towards change, and thousands of continuing education hours have been earned. Offered at no cost to participants, we ensure that it’s accessible to all who wish to enroll.



Kelly Hayes

Thanks to financial support from the school’s alumni and friends, we can bring well-known experts to give plenary addresses. Over the years this has included **Kelly Hayes** and Mariame Kaba, organizers and co-authors of *Let This Radicalize You: Organizing and the Revolution of Reciprocal Care*; Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*; and nationally recognized therapist and speaker Rwenshaun Miller.

Clinical Associate Professor Laura Dresser, one of the conference planning committee co-chairs explains, “I have always been proud to be part of this project to bring challenging timely content on racial justice to the range of those we reach. Especially because from its very first year (2015), our goal has been to provide content to unsettle and provoke us, to inspire and change us, and, most importantly, to lead to action in our communities in our work.

“It was so timely and important, so useful and practical and I appreciated the focus on hope and the value of continuing to hold hope as a motivator for action.”

“This was my first time attending and I am already looking forward to next year!”

“Please continue to offer these conferences annually. The topics are really thought provoking and offer more than a surface level understanding of the topic; they delve deep.”

A few more quotes from participants from last year indicate how helpful and well-received this annual conference is:

We hope you can join us for the 2026 conference in January. Learn more at: confrontinginjustice.socwork.wisc.edu



FACULTY RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING



Lara Gerassi



Jaime Goldberg

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR Lara Gerassi and Clinical Assistant Professor Jaime Goldberg received UW-Madison awards for their outstanding teaching. Gerassi was named the 2024 Phillip R. Certain & Gary D. Sandefur Distinguished Faculty Award winner which supports outstanding teaching in the College of Letters and Science. Goldberg was named Interprofessional Simulation Educator of the Year by UW Health's Clinical Simulation Program.

Dr. Gerassi's pedagogical and mentoring approach with her students is informed by a critical, intersectional lens, which is essential to dismantling systems of oppression and advancing social justice. She teaches multiple courses including Sex Trading and Sex Trafficking and Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups. Her research and teaching are informed by social work practice experience, primarily with survivors of violence.

Dr. Goldberg was honored for her work providing robust and realistic learning opportunities to prepare health care professionals for actual patient care situations. She worked on an Interprofessional Education session that incorporates social work, medical, pharmacy, and nursing students. The award notes, "Overall, the aim is to bring what each discipline brings to the table and respond with empathy upon hearing difficult information. In every meeting, every email, every conversation, Jaime works to keep these goals in mind when developing this education. She brings us back to the heart of why we are there."



FACULTY RESEARCH GRANTS

A MAJOR STRENGTH of our faculty is their success in securing grants to support their research in an increasingly competitive environment, made even more difficult by the Federal Government's recent substantial reduction in available funds. Despite that, a look at some recent faculty grants provides insight into the important societal issues they work on. Below are several examples of their work:

Household Income and Child Development in the First Three Years of Life

Professor Katherine Magnuson and colleagues, including a team of neuroscientists, economists and developmental psychologists, seek to fill important gaps in scientific knowledge about the role of economic resources in early child development by evaluating the first randomized controlled trial to determine whether unconditional cash payments to parents have a causal effect on the cognitive, socio-emotional, and brain development of infants and toddlers in low-income families. The research is supported by the National Institute of Child Health and Development.



Lauren Bishop

Study to Illuminate Issues for Aging Autistic Adults

Associate Professor Lauren Bishop and colleagues' five-year grant from the National Institute on Aging will develop an algorithm to identify what health conditions may impact older autistic adults. The algorithm will be used to identify autistic individuals at higher risk of early mortality.

The research team explains the need for studies and interventions to support autistic people as they age into and through adulthood which has lagged the support for younger autistic people.

Community-Engaged Research to Promote Mental Health and Successful Reentry Following Incarceration



Pajarita Charles

With a grant from the NIH, Associate Professor Pajarita Charles, UW-Madison colleague Daniel Grupe (Center for Healthy Minds), and other community and academic partners are developing and evaluating a mindfulness-based curriculum intended to support mental health and successful reentry following incarceration. For individuals

who have experienced trauma and disconnection, practicing skills of mindfulness and self-compassion among a community of peers has great promise for bringing about individual and collective healing. The need for supportive mental health during reentry is significant: approximately half of people experiencing incarceration have a history of mental health problems, but

very few receive professional help during incarceration or upon reentry. Because mental health difficulties impede successful reentry outcomes such as stable housing, employment, and positive relationships, supportive mental health interventions can have ripple effects on these downstream outcomes, helping to interrupt cycles of incarceration that disproportionately affect communities of color.

Understanding Young People Who Trade Sex for Financial Compensation

Associate Professor Lara Gerassi received a five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health which seeks to understand the extent to which young people trade sex for financial compensation, why they do so, and the associated risks, protective factors, benefits, and harms. The aim of the research is to provide a more comprehensive understanding of sex trading, which is needed to inform policies and practices to reduce harm. This is believed to be the first national study to evaluate sex-trading behaviors and circumstances on such a large scale.

WORTH NOTING

Anne Wackman Oros Associate Professor **TOVA WALSH** was elected President of the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (GADE). GADE plays a vital role in shaping the future of social work and doctoral education. Walsh's leadership will be a tremendous asset not just to GADE, but our school, and social work doctoral training more broadly.

Professor **KATHERINE MAGNUSON** has been selected



Katherine Magnuson

as a Fellow of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare for her important research on the well-being and development of economically disadvantaged children and their families. Magnuson joins six other members and former members of our faculty who are Fellows: Lonnie Berger, Maria Cancian, Jan Greenberg, Marsha Mailick, Dan Meyer, and Stephanie Robert.

The school is proud to be among the schools of social work with the most faculty awarded fellow status.



Laura Dresser

As Associate Director of the High Road Strategy Center, Clinical Associate Professor **LAURA DRESSER** provides important insights on the economy for policy makers and the public through reports such as the annual *State of Working Wisconsin* and frequent media interviews. For example, she was interviewed for a special British Broadcasting Corp (BBC) podcast discussing how the cost of living was impacting Wisconsin voters, prior to the 2024 presidential election.

Assistant Professor **LB KLEIN** was named a finalist for the Linda Saltzman New Investigator Award by the CDC Foundation (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Dr. Klein was recognized for their "breadth of work, experience, and commitment to building the field of the prevention of intimate partner violence, domestic violence, sexual violence, or dating violence."

Many of our people get featured in news coverage about their work. One example: Long-term Lecturer **CARISSA HODGSON'S** work helping parents with cancer navigate their role as a parent was featured on ABC's Good Morning America and NPR's Morning Edition.

TANYA ATKINSON, MSW '97, NAMED THE 2025 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENT



The Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work's Board of Visitors selected Tanya Atkinson, MSW '97, as the 2025 recipient of our Distinguished Alumni Award.

Tanya is the President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin (PPWI), Wisconsin's largest nonprofit reproductive health care provider, serving 55,000 Wisconsinites each year at 22 health centers, including a new statewide virtual center. The award was presented at an April 2025 gathering of alumni and friends in Madison, where she joined Director Marci Ybarra in a dialogue to share her experiences about moving from her MSW to leading such a large and critical organization.

Prior to joining Planned Parenthood, Tanya was the director of the Milwaukee office of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (now Kids Forward), a legislative aide in the Wisconsin Legislature, and social worker specializing in youth services. Oh, and she was a part-time comedian for 10 years.

Recognizing her outstanding work, Wisconsin Congresswoman Gwen Moore invited Tanya to the last State of the Union Address commenting that, "Tanya's leadership at Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin has been instrumental in ensuring that individuals across the state receive the healthcare they need and deserve. Her leadership and dedication to ensuring that all individuals have access to the care they need has made a profound impact on the lives of countless Wisconsinites. As reproductive health care and women's right to control their own bodies continues to be under threat in Wisconsin and nationwide."

NEW BOARD OF VISITORS MEMBERS NAMED

We are pleased to announce three new members to the school's Board of Visitors. Members, who may be graduates or closely affiliated friends of the school, act as ambassadors and advocates of the school by strengthening our ties to alumni and providing consultation on issues facing the school's mission.

Tanya Atkinson, MSW '76 is the President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin (PPWI), Wisconsin's largest nonprofit reproductive health care provider. She is the recipient of our 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award.

Thomas Corbett, PhD '88, is an Emeritus Senior Scientist at UW-Madison's Institute for Research on Poverty and Emeritus faculty member of the School of Social Work. Now retired, during his long academic and policy career, Tom worked with governments at all levels including in Washington D.C. where he helped develop President Clinton's welfare reform legislation. He has written dozens of articles and reports on poverty, social policy, and human services issues and given hundreds of talks across the nation on these topics.

Anne Wackman Oros, BA '72 worked in social work. She and her husband John Oros (BBA '71) have fostered over 50 babies in their New Jersey home. A long-time advocate for adoption and foster care, the United States Congress recognized Anne with an Angels in Adoption Award. Anne and John recently established the Anne Wackman Oros Professor of Social Work currently held by School Associate Professor Tova Walsh.

MORE ALUMNI NEWS



Robert (Bob) Mohelnitzky MSSW '70 was awarded the Tucson, AZ UW-Madison Alumni of the Year Award for his substantial volunteer work in the community. Prior to retiring in Tucson, Bob was the Director of the Dane County Mental Health Center (now Journey Mental Health) and Executive Director Second Harvest Food Bank in Madison.

Joel Neuberger MSSW '72, had a 40-year career in mental health/substance abuse. He has written an illustrated memoir focused on the challenges of being a first-generation German Jew whose parents were refugees from Nazi Germany, having barely escaped the Holocaust.

Efrain Diaz, MSSW '74 and Kathleen Diaz MSSW '73, were married and lived in Peru before beginning graduate school. Both are retired, having had long human service careers and continuing to contribute to their community in Salem, OR. Efrain is also the author of several books of poetry in English and Spanish.

Joan Levy Zlotnik, MSSW '74, received the prestigious 2025 NASW Foundation's Knee-Wittman Lifetime Achievement Award. She was honored "for her efforts in improving child welfare services and bringing awareness to the health and mental health needs of children and society's most fragile communities." Reflecting on her education at UW-Madison, Joan explained, "While I left Madison over 50 years ago – Allen Pincus and Anne Minahan's systems approach to social work and the concept of social worker as Change Agent has stayed with me throughout my career, from direct practice to policy, advocacy, and program development efforts focused on systems change."

Greg Winkler, MSSW '84, deputy director at Rock County Human Services Department, was recently elected to serve as NASW Wisconsin's South Central/Southwest Region Representative in Janesville.

Ray Engel, PhD '88, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Southwest Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging. He recently retired as Emeritus Professor of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work. Lisa Quinn-Lee, PhD, MSSW ('98), LICSW is Professor and Chair of the Social Work Department at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Nancy Saiz MSW '02, a community development specialist at the City of Madison, was named one of Wisconsin's Most Influential Latino Leaders by Madison 365.

Emily Mann, PhD '03, Professor at Northeastern University, is a co-author of *An Introduction to Human Services and Social Change*, Oxford University Press 2023.

Chi-Fang Wu, PhD '04, a Professor and PhD Program Director at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, received the Group for Doctoral Education (GADE) Donna Harrington Faculty Award for Excellence in Mentoring of Social Work Doctoral Students. In receiving the award, she thanked her UW-Madison mentors, Maria Cancian, Dan Meyer, and Stephanie Robert.

Kelly Aschbrenner, PhD '07 is the principal investigator on a \$3 million NIMH grant to study the long-term sustainment of an evidence-based lifestyle intervention in 39 mental

health organizations designed to increase the life expectancy of persons with severe mental illness. She is an Associate Professor at Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth.

Sarah Valencia, MSW '07, is the Assistant Deputy Secretary of the State of Wisconsin's Department of Health Services. A former peace corps volunteer in Honduras, Sarah also teaches in our MSW program.

Daniel Kigeya, MSW '07, was named by Madison365 as one of Wisconsin's Most Influential Black Leaders. He is the principal of Madison West High School where he leads a school of about 2,200 students and 130 teaching staff and is a senior lecturer for the school.

Karen Arnold Truax, MSW '08, recently completed her DSW degree at Tulane University. She writes, "I credit so much of my experience in that program and my work to the wonderful education I received at the UW- Madison!"

Alexandra Garcia, MSW '10, is the recipient of the 2025 School Social Worker of the Year Award from the Wisconsin School Social Workers Association (WSSWA). Alex, who works at DeForest Area High School, in Wisconsin, was nominated for this honor by two assistant principals. They highlighted her exceptional work with students, staff, and families, as well as her strong problem-solving and relationship-building skills.

Yolanda Shelton-Morris, MSW '16 was named by Madison365 as one of Wisconsin's Most Influential Black Leaders. Yolanda, a long-term lecturer for the school, is community resources manager for the City of Madison and owner of Divine Design & Organization.

Arlyn Gonzalez, MSW '17, is Director of the City of Madison Employee Assistance Program. She and her staff worked with over 200 first responders following the tragic Abundant Life Christian School shooting in December 2024.

Njemeh Barrow, MSW '18, is Treatment Director, Division of Adult Institutions (DAI) in the Wisconsin Department of Corrections.



Taylor (Gilbert) Wilson's, MSW '18's website and podcast *Social Work to Wealth* (socialworktowealth.com) offers a wide range of information on topics like debt reduction, career resources, side hustles, and managing your money. In addition, Taylor and former classmate Faith Voss, MSW'18, host a regular podcast about social workers' finances and issues related to the profession.

IN MEMORIAM



FRANCES WEINSTEIN, BA '45 passed away March 2025 in Madison at age 101. She worked as a social worker and was very active in the Madison's Jewish Community.

DOROTHY BERTSCHY, BA '50 passed away September 2024 at age 96.

THOMAS MAZANETZ, BSW '59, passed away September 2023. Tom worked for Lutheran Social Services as a psychiatric social worker.

LLOYD LIND, MSSW '68 passed away February 2025. Lloyd's professional career was in corrections. He was Director of Social Services at Oakwood Correctional Institution in Madison and retired in 1996.

ANDREA KILLING, BA '68 passed away December 2024 in Middleton, WI. She was a social worker for the Red Cross in Madison and a library assistant at Middleton High School.

BEVERLY JACOBSON, MSSW '71 passed away September 2024. She worked for the State of Wisconsin and later received her PhD in Educational Psychology and continued to work in human services.

GABE BLOOD, MSSW '72 passed away May 2024 in Madison. She worked for over 40 years for the State of Wisconsin in the areas of developmental disabilities and childcare support.

TRUDY MARSHALL, BSW '74 passed away in July 2025 in Minneapolis, MN. Trudy, a generous supporter of the school, served as Chair of our Board of

Visitors. A mentor to many women, Trudy was Vice President of Marketing, Public Relations, and Outreach at North Memorial Hospital in Robbinsdale, MN.

CAROLYN HOLM EMMERSON, MSSW '80 passed away in April 2021. A peace corps volunteer who worked and volunteered internationally on several occasions, Carolyn was the Executive Director of Vets House in Madison. Her family is establishing a social work scholarship in her honor.

THOMAS SWANT, MSSW '81 passed away in July 2025 in Madison. Tom worked in developmental disabilities for the State of Wisconsin for 32 years. He developed a federal disabilities screening tool which is still in use today.

ANNA LAMKIN HORTON, PHD '83 passed away in July 2024 in Minneapolis, MN. She was active professionally and as a volunteer in domestic violence child abuse. Anna was named "Child Advocate of the Year 2000" for outstanding lifetime achievement by Prevent Child Abuse Utah.

NANCY MARZ, MSSW '85 passed away in May 2025 in Madison. She worked at the Mendota Mental Health Institute and the Wisconsin Department of Family Services.

SARAH NEWPORT, MSW '85 passed away Feb 2023. She was a social worker at Meriter Hospital in Madison until her retirement in the 1990s.

CLAIRE MCARDLE passed away April, 2025 in Madison. Clare taught our healthcare field unit and was a long-time social worker at St. Mary's Hospital.



PROFESSOR EMERITA MARY ANN TEST, INTERNATIONAL LEADER IN MENTAL HEALTH, PASSES AWAY

It would be difficult to overstate the contributions Professor Mary Ann Test made to the field of mental health, the teaching of students and professionals and her work with mental health consumers and their families.

Working at the Mendota Mental Health Institute in Madison in the early 1970's, she and several colleagues founded the Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT). At that time, no program existed anywhere to guide the reintegration of psychiatric hospitalized persons with severe and persistent mental illness back into the community. Consequently, lacking systemic supports, many eventually were re-admitted to the hospital, which became known as "the revolving door," phenomenon.

Mary Ann and colleagues' creation, implementation, and dissemination of the PACT model revolutionized the approach to delivering services in our public mental health system. Its impact has been far reaching as many of its key features were incorporated in the National Institute of Mental Health's Community Support Program model and extended to serve persons with co-occurring substance abuse and mental illness, homelessness, jail diversion programs, and children with serious emotional disorders. The PACT model has been adopted worldwide including in Russia, the UK, Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, and Canada. Consequently, countless people with serious mental illness and their families have benefitted worldwide.

The school was fortunate that Mary Ann joined the faculty in 1978. An outstanding researcher, teacher, and advocate she and school colleagues including Mona Wasow, Jan Greenberg, and Deb Allness created the first program in a school of social work focusing on working with persons with severe and persistent mental illness and their families. In recognition of their work, the school received the "Excellence in Training Award from the National Alliance of the Mentally Ill."



Social work students need and deserve assistance in funding their education. Most of the assistance we can provide comes directly from the generosity of alumni and friends of the school – whether that be through scholarships or other programmatic opportunities. Thank you!



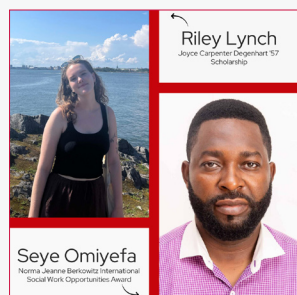
HONORING A FRIEND AND CLASSMATE'S MEMORY

School of Social Work alums Bob Mueller and Greg Skibinski met at UW-Madison in the early 1970s. As Bob explains, "We immediately bonded and had roles in each other's weddings."

Bob went to medical school and Greg, after receiving his PhD, was a social work professor at Missouri State University. Although in later years they lost touch, when Bob found out that Greg had passed away, he wanted to make sure his friend was remembered. Bob made a generous gift to the school which will allow us to award an annual scholarship to a PhD student in Greg's memory.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR OUR STUDENTS

In a 2024 survey of our students, a majority said that mental health challenges impacted their education and training. Recognizing the increasing stress and challenges our students face both with their clients and in their personal lives, we wanted to ensure that they were able to quickly access supportive mental health services. We have used some of our annual fund to contract with the University Counseling Service to provide a dedicated counselor/therapist who will be available to see students both at the school and at the Counseling Center. One component will be Let's Talk – a drop-in program offering informal, confidential consultations.



NEEDED SCHOLARSHIPS

Thanks to alumni and friends we offer more than 40 scholarships to nearly 100 students annually. Often these scholarships are named by donors who provide the funds either in their names or in memory of family members

or friends. Many others are provided from our general fund. Scholarships range from range from \$1,000 to full-tuition and a stipend. Last year, we gave more than \$635,000 in scholarships plus more funding through programs such as Title IV-E Child Welfare Training.

To find out more about the range of scholarships and their supporters see socwork.wisc.edu/students/awards-and-scholarships

SUPPORTING RURAL SOCIAL WORK FIELD PLACEMENTS

When alum and Board of Visitor Member Bill Goehring learned about the school's interest in increasing student field placements in rural communities, and the financial barriers for students wanting the opportunity, he made a generous gift to offset the additional travel expenses students incur in these placements. Goehring, whose social work career was in a less populated area, understood the importance of increasing the number of rural social workers. His gift supports and encourages student interest in this field of practice.

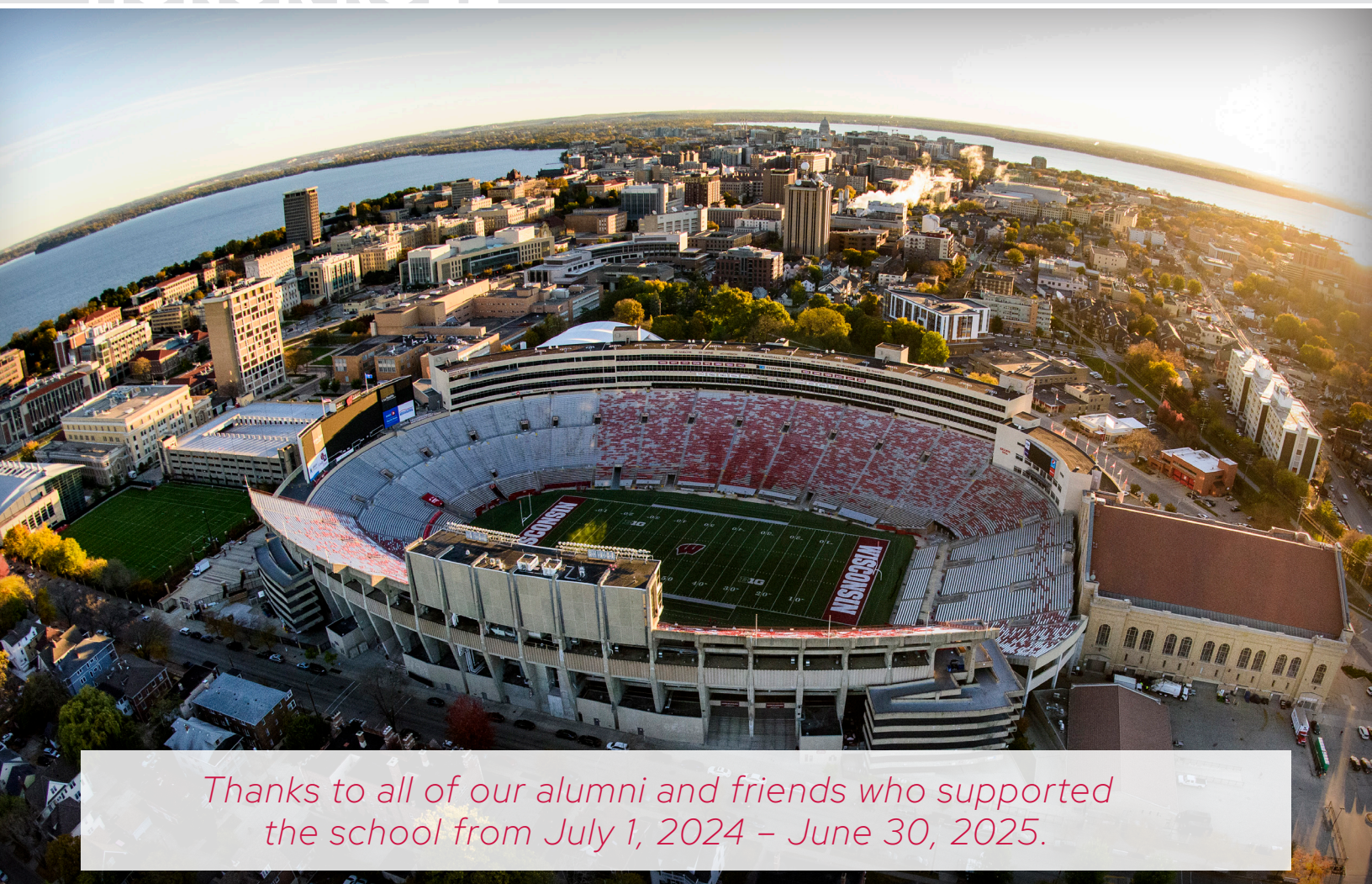
PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHEDELIC HEALING – NEW COURSE FOR CURRENT STUDENTS AND PRACTICING CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS

Alum Meghan Morrissey and her family have been long-time supporters of the mental health area specialization at the school. Recognizing the potential promise of psychedelic medicines to improve treatment options for people suffering from various mental health-related issues, depression, trauma, PTSD, and other conditions, Meghan provided funding to offer a summer course in this area. She wanted to reach both students and social work professionals (and bring them together), so she provided tuition support for 12 practicing social workers who took the course.

ANNUAL FUND

Thanks to hundreds of our alums who make gifts to our annual fund each year, we can meet pressing needs and respond to innovative opportunities. Most gifts to the annual fund are used directly for student support.

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Thanks to all of our alumni and friends who supported the school from July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

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