

INTERDEPENDENT

Letter from the director

by Charles Seitz, Ph.D.,
M.S.W., LCSW



It is hard to believe that I will be starting my 10th year at Messiah in the fall. One of the most exciting parts of being here so long is that I am able to see our B.S.W. graduates making a difference with families and communities locally and around the world. Please take time to read through our newsletter to get a glimpse of all of the opportunities and experiences our students have in social work at Messiah, and how they are being prepared to make a difference once they graduate.



Strength and peace,
Dr. Charles Seitz

Letter from the field placement coordinator

by Michelle Dixon George, M.S.W., LCSW, BCD

Students of the Messiah College social work program are making an impact in the surrounding community and demonstrating professionalism and the spirit of Christ in the field. I have the privilege of serving as the social work field coordinator. As part of my duties, I conduct site visits of student placements and interview field supervisors related to student performance in the field. What a joy it is to hear about the level of excellence our students are achieving. It is not uncommon to hear from field supervisors that our BSW students are achieving, in some cases, more than what is expected from masters level interns. How is it that Messiah College social work students are achieving at such a high level in the field? Part of the answer is that students begin their education in the field, maintain their learning in the field, and conclude their Messiah College experiences in the field. Service learning is such an integral part of the program that it is impossible to discuss social work education at Messiah without involving field. The average Messiah College social work student will engage in a minimum of 600 hours of service learning throughout his or her four years. Many students exceed this number voluntarily through additional internships abroad or at either the Philadelphia or Harrisburg campuses.

Students who are involved in the social work club or Phi Alpha Social Work honor society assume additional service roles as they volunteer in the community through various service projects. Students of the Messiah College social work program understand that a social work education has its foundation in the classroom with clear depictions of the values and ethics of the field and the theoretical knowledge to engage in competent generalist service. But it's the application of this learning in the field that transforms them from students to social workers. Recently a student shared with me her own understanding of this journey. She noted that when she began her second year placement she was surprised that she was being treated by others at the agency as if she was a social work professional; later she realized that she was becoming one. Students are being challenged in their own spiritual formation process to understand what it means for them to be a social worker who identifies as a servant of Christ. Transformed students who are prepared to transform their communities with a generalist social work education and an understanding of their own faith: that is what we are attempting to produce here at Messiah College. From the reports that I am gathering from the field, it is a rich harvest.

Social worker of the year—Audrey Martin

By Charles Seitz



Each year the social work program picks an outstanding senior to receive the Social Work Award for Exceptional Leadership and Academic

Achievement. It is always difficult to choose one student because all of our seniors demonstrate significant skill and competency in the field. This year, we are pleased to announce that Audrey Martin is the recipient of the Social Work Award for Exceptional Leadership and Academic Achievement. Audrey is an excellent stu-

dent as demonstrated by her 3.82 GPA in the major and a cumulative GPA of 3.79. This student has also been extremely active in our program through her participation in the social work club, her membership in the Phi Alpha Social Work National Honor Society, her appointment as a social work diplomat to promote the program to prospective students, her work on the International Social Work committee and her appointment to the Social Work Community Advisory Committee. Audrey's strengths include a strong commitment to the values and skills of the social work profession, her ability to manage multiple projects and tasks, her verbal and written skills, and her commitment to social and economic justice

issues. The student is also committed to a strengths and empowerment perspective. She has an extensive service to others record while at Messiah, which includes working with at-risk youth through the Second Mile Program, interning with The Community Action Program in Lancaster, Pa., and with Adoptions from the Heart of Harrisburg. Additionally, her senior placement is with the Milton Hershey School. She has also completed volunteer work with the Harrisburg Salvation Army After School Program, New Hope Ministries, Center for Champions After School Program and the Syracuse Rescue Mission in New York State. Congratulations, Audrey, on being the 2009 recipient of this award.

ALUMNI: a special request from the program director

The social work program is working to develop posters to promote the program and to highlight what alumni are doing around the globe. We would really appreciate your willingness to provide us with information that could be made into posters to display around campus. Thank you for your anticipated assistance to promote the profession. Please e-mail the following information to cseitz@messiah.edu:

Name and job title:

Year you graduated:

How the B.S.W. prepared you for graduate studies:
(if you went to graduate school, short paragraph, be specific)

How social work prepared you for your vocation:
(short paragraph)

Current job and responsibilities: (short paragraph)

Electronic photo of yourself (no clients because of confidentiality issues). It would be nice to have a photo in your work environment, if possible.

**you must note in the e-mail that you give permission to use this information (specify—poster, and or Web site).*

Strength and peace,
Charles Seitz, program director
Messiah College, social work

Alumni highlight By Joy Sandel

When first asked to write something for the social work newsletter I was a loss for words. I have never been seen as the linguistic one, and while I love talking face-to-face, I struggle with my writing. Then it hit me, even as a graduate from Messiah College I was still being challenged to go beyond my comfort zone and try new things.

After leaving Messiah College I found myself at Adelphi University (Long Island, N.Y.) and thrilled about obtaining my masters degree. I planned on becoming an addictions counselor; this did not happen. Sometimes life gets in the way of itself and I woke up one day back in Central Pennsylvania looking for a job. I spent some time as a Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS) and was excited when I got a phone call from my old internship supervisor from New Hope Ministries offering me a job. I went from assuming I would be a counselor with my masters in New York City, to working with a bunch of students from Dover, Pennsylvania. In addition to this, I have been able to tap into my old passion, teaching. While staying connected with Dr. Seitz, I was given a few opportunities to speak to social work students about applying learning to real life situations.

So I guess, all in all, the point I am trying to make is that I firmly believe that we will never be sure of where our lives will lead us (disagree if you would like). While we might not know our future, it is our past experiences, teachings, and connections that make us ready for whatever the world throws at us.

Thanks for listening.

Encouraging future Messiah social work students

By Christina Miles

Throughout the past year-and-a-half, I have had the unique opportunity to interact with many perspective and accepted students inquiring about the social work program at Messiah College as the program student diplomat. Interacting with perspective students (and usually their parents) has allowed me to reflect upon my own time at Messiah and to process why I chose this school and the social work major. I often tell parents and students that I chose Messiah because of the integrated spiritual guidance in each major, and I chose the social work program because it prepares me to be a missionary in untypical mission settings. Whenever I describe social work like this, I see the eyes the perspective students light up because that is exactly what they want to do—minister. It has been exciting to see others as they realize that social work isn't the secular profession that they once thought it was, but rather, a ministry and an opportunity to be a missionary of sorts.

When asked for advice from both students and their parents about my choice of social work (and their soon-to-be-declared major), I tell them several things: first, God called me to Messiah and into social work—this is the profession that will allow me to minister, even though God is not directing me into vocational ministry; and second, if this is God's calling in your life, he will see you through it. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." This particular passage has given me the hope and the peace of knowing that as I follow God's direction, he will take care of me. Often many concerned parents (particularly fathers of daughters) question the safety and the financial situations of this type of profession after education. My own parents had the same concerns and, after much prayer together, submitting my own will for my life (and theirs too), we began to understand the peace of following God's course for my own life—no matter what he called me too. I hope that these simple words of advice I offer to parents and their students bring them peace of mind and hope for the future.

I look forward to continuing my involvement as a student delegate for the fall 2009 semester. Whenever participating in a student preview day, I try my best to relate my own experiences and anxieties entering into Messiah and into this profession to the new and wide-eyed prospective students. It has been refreshing to interact with eager learners, and a blessing to talk with proud parents trying to guide their children through this major decision.

Ethics Conference 2009

Once again, the social work program helped facilitate the annual ethics conference for helping professionals. The keynote speaker for the 5th Annual Ethics Conference held on April 24 was Everett Worthington, Ph.D., a leader and author on forgiveness. Participants were also able to earn up to six continuing education credits. Our 2010 conference will be held on April 23 and will feature Dr. Fernando Garzon, a well known speaker and presenter on Christian counseling techniques, who will present on Ethical Guidelines for Christian Therapists: Using the Bible in Therapy.

Graduating class highlights

Sarah Hazlett

SENIOR PLACEMENT: YWCA of Greater Harrisburg
PLANS AFTER GRADUATION: Graduate school to get MSW at either The University of Pittsburgh, Widener University, or California State—Long Beach.

Emily Nelson

SENIOR PLACEMENT: YWCA (crisis advocate/counselor)
PLANS AFTER GRADUATION: I will be moving to San Diego, where I hope to get a job working with immigrants and/or refugees. I will be applying for MSW programs for fall of 2010.

Rachel E. Ward

SENIOR PLACEMENT: YWCA of Greater Harrisburg
PLANS AFTER GRADUATION: Graduate school for MSW: accepted to University of Pittsburgh, waiting to hear back from Widener University and then will decide between the two.

Elyse Joy De Jong

Senior Placement: Dauphin County Area Agency on Aging
PLANS AFTER GRADUATION: Plans are pending currently. I have applied to Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Services for the advanced standing MSW program. I have not heard back from them yet, so I am waiting to see. In the meantime, I am searching for jobs in New Jersey (my home) and applying for positions.

Jessanna Hall

SENIOR PLACEMENT: Penn State Hershey Medical Center
PLANS AFTER GRADUATION: Upon graduation, I will be nannying for a few months as I look for jobs and decide where I want to live beginning in the fall. My interests in the social work field include working with children, working in the medical field, and using art in social work. I look forward to the ways in which God will move and guide me within social work.

Audrey Martin

SENIOR PLACEMENT: Milton Hershey School
PLANS AFTER GRADUATION: Accepted to Widener University MSW Graduate Program (part-time, advanced standing) and seeking employment in the social work field.

Social welfare debate

By Christiana Miles

Each year the SOWK 420 Social Welfare Policies in the U.S. class has the opportunity to publically debate a specific federal policy that currently affects and shapes the lives of many. The 2009 debate wrestled with the question: should Messiah College establish an affirmative action policy?

What may not be known is that Messiah College currently does not have an established affirmative action policy that promotes diversity through allowing gender, race, and ethnic heritage to affect the hiring or acceptance of personnel and students. It is easy to see that the Messiah College campus is very homogenous in gender and race; if asked what the typical student at Messiah College looks like, many would answer a Caucasian female. This laid the foundation for the structured arguments for the debate: Messiah should install an affirmative action policy and Messiah should continue to invest in alternatives to affirmative action.

The “Yes” side (Messiah should establish an affirmative action policy)

Two of the arguments the pro-affirmative action policy at Messiah group utilized were that affirmative action allows for a fair evaluation of persons by making up for existing social inequalities; affirmative action-opponents also spare criticism of the real beneficiaries of the education system—the wealthy and white. This team also used historical data of Messiah College to back their arguments. Their well-informed and structured arguments offered much food for thought to both the opposing side and to students attending the chapel.

The “No” side (Messiah should continue to invest in alternatives to affirmative action)

The con side structured their argument with several main points: financial considerations, the argument of reverse discrimination, the constitutionality as per the 14th Amendment of affirmative action, and various facts and stats regarding a policy of this nature. The “no” side recognized that the lack of diversity on campus continues to spur its faculty, staff, and students on in finding alternative ways to affirmative action in drawing students and staff of diverse backgrounds onto campus.

The purpose of this debate was not to sway students one way or another, but to promote free thinking and opinion formation in regards to such a policy. Our hope, as the SOWK 420 class and the social work program, is that students were able to leave with a better understanding of this issue, and that conversations will continue and individuals will uncover reconciliation of this issue with their faith.

Study abroad opportunities

By Sarah Hazlett

I studied abroad in Athens, Greece, during the spring semester of my junior year. I had an unforgettable time. The academic workload was not as intense as being a student at Messiah, but adjusting to the culture, language, geographic, and social differences was challenging. It was an eye-opening experience to be immersed in a culture so different from my own. Studying abroad allowed me to grow as an individual, learning new things about myself everyday. Some of the things that I learned about myself I will hopefully take with me into my social work career. It was insightful to learn how other countries view America and their position in the world. I had the opportunity to use tolerance and use the skills I acquired from the diversity classes I took while at Messiah. While taking a photojournalism class, one of my assignments was to write an article and take corresponding pictures. My group chose to look at street beggars in Europe. During our spring break we traveled to many different European cities that allowed us to get a perspective, not just from Greece, but from several European countries. I am really happy that I planned ahead in my college schedule so that I was able to spend a semester abroad because I found it to be a really rewarding experience.



By Rebecca Coover

The opportunity to study abroad in Ethiopia, Uganda, and Rwanda allowed me to use my social work skills in a global context. In addition, I was able to see how the social work profession is applied differently in cross-cultural settings. Specifically, my time in Ethiopia challenged me



to work with populations I would never have normally considered working with. The cross-cultural setting gave me the opportunity to evaluate the connection between my faith and social work. Since returning I have a greater sense of what it means to be a Christian social worker as opposed to a social worker who happens to be Christian.

The Department of Social Work welcomes a new professor

By Hazel Shively



This past fall our social work department welcomed a new professor to the Messiah community. Over toasted sandwiches and tomato soup, Michelle George

and I joined in conversation; discussing her childhood roots, family, role models, educational background, field experiences, and hobbies.

A 1988 Messiah College alum, Professor George is originally from Lilitz, Lancaster. She graduated from Messiah with a major in psychology and later attended Temple University to obtain a Master in Social Work. Although courses may overlap within the psychology and social work departments, I found myself intrigued with her decision to switch fields. Responding to my curiosity, Professor

George explained the various questions she raised toward systemic issues. Essentially, she was not satisfied with treating the symptoms of problems but wanted to understand how they formulated in order to address underlying causes. For her, the field of social work provided such an avenue.

Prior to accepting the position at Messiah, Professor George taught in the social work department at Lancaster Bible College. Her field experiences include, but are not limited to, the clinical and international sphere. Traveling overseas to countries like England, Thailand, and Indonesia has given Professor George a broader perspective as well as a passion to support and advocate for the global community. Discussing the relation between faith and work she told me, "I hope it [faith] is my work. I don't see it as a separate thing. How it is expressed depends on the context."

Continuing the conversation and

lightening up the mood, I made sure to enlighten Professor George on my favorite music artists. She in turn, did the same for me, naming off bands like Third Day. When it came to her favorite movie, there was no debate: "Hands down, *Braveheart*." This epic tale wrapped in passion and a main character with the willingness to pursue freedom inspires her. Role models she admires are pioneer Amelia Earhart and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. In her free time her family comes first. Professor George told me about her husband, and their nine year old daughter Rebeckah. In addition to spending time with her family, she enjoys watching the history channel, gardening, reading books on the civil war era, hunting, lobbying, and hiking.

We were just about to end our time when I asked her to share some advice to those who would be reading. Simply stated, she said, "Live in the moment."

New Web site coming soon

By Elyse De Jong

If you have been on the department's Web site lately you probably noticed that it is time for it to be updated! Who are these people? What classes are they in? Where are the voices of the current students, instead of ones that graduated many years ago? These are the questions that I asked myself when I viewed the Web site last semester. For my individual learning project for Helping Processes IV Practice with Communities and Organizations I chose to re-design the social work programs website. I did not actually design the Web site on the web (I am leaving that up to the professionals) but I designed the Web site on paper. I wrote up information for different sections, got current student input, and sent a survey to social work alumni asking about their current careers. Additionally I tried to make the Web site as user-friendly as possible, so new students can see what the social work program is truly like at Messiah College. Although I was hoping that the re-vamped Web site would be up and running by the end of the year, the most current update that I received is that it is still being built and is supposed to go live by the end of the semester. So in the next few weeks and during your summer break keep an eye out for the new and improved social work Web site!

MESSIAH COLLEGE Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice

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Social Work Major

Messiah's social work major is designed to help students gain social work knowledge, skills, and values as they seek social and economic justice for clients.

The social work major at Messiah College is dedicated to providing a high quality educational program to prepare students for beginning social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Commission of the College of Social Work

coming soon!

... by the Council on Social Work Education. Our ... with a generalist approach to social work practice. Social work majors ... Messiah's liberal arts concentration, along with the extensive practice experience provided in the social work major, gives students a unique background and strong qualifications for a wide range of professional positions in public and private social service agencies.

Want to hear directly from social work students? Read senior interviews and the student club updates.

Read our newsletters Spring 2006 Newsletter Spring 2007 Newsletter

Messiah College social work program encourages all students to consider continuing their education at the graduate level. Social work majors particularly want to think about continuing their studies in a master's of social work (MSW) program. Messiah's program will enable graduates to earn an MSW from an accredited graduate school within one year.

CURRICULUM

For more details on the curriculum requirements and the types of courses you would be taking as a Social Work major, visit our Online Course Catalog or

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT | Jessana Hall

By Ann Johnston



Jessana Hall is a senior social work major here at Messiah College. Growing up in Phoenixville, Pa., Jessana was home-schooled, and when it came to choosing a college, she knew she wanted to go to a small Christian school. Messiah College won her over with the atmosphere and its Christian depth. She came in as “undecided” concerning her major, and then switched into Christian ministries with a global focus. Although, after a missions trip to India, she realized that she might not feel called to overseas missions, but she still wanted to serve people. After speaking with a social work major, the head of the department, and a lot of prayer, Jessana entered into the major, viewing it as her opportunity to do missions in the U.S.

Since then, she has really enjoyed the social work major and all it has to offer. Jessana’s favorite part the social work program is the amount of hands-on practice. She currently has a full-time internship at the Hershey Medical Center as social worker for pulmonary patients in Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU). As a social worker, she arranges how to meet the needs of patients after they leave the MICU. She interacts with patients, families, nurses, doctors, insurance companies, rehabilitation centers, and more. As difficult as it may be to deal with patients who are in such critical, and often times, fatal, conditions, Jessana approaches such an incredible opportunity with a positive heart to use this as an opportunity to share who faith in creative ways.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT | Emily Nelson

by Heidi Nonnenmocher



Emily Nelson is enjoying her internship with the YWCA of Harrisburg’s Violence Intervention and Prevention Department. She encounters new situations every day. Some of her responsibilities include sitting with parents while their children are examined and interviewed to determine the incidence of sexual abuse, answering phones for the crises hot line, supporting victims at preliminary assault hearings and PFA (protective order) hearings, and working with students at John Harris High School to develop a rape prevention education program known as RYOT (Rallying Youth Organizations Together against rape). Attending assault hearings can often be discouraging. Emily’s role at hearings is to sit with victims and offer them support. Most victims do not show up for their hearings. They usually drop the charges against their abusers.

Individual counseling is Emily’s favorite internship duty. She currently has two clients that she sees for one hour each week. Emily’s confidence in her social work skills has been raised

through providing individual counseling. She feels as though she is truly making a difference in the lives of her clients by helping them to process their thoughts and feelings. Her clients are recovering from sexual and physical abuse. Emily also enjoys observing and co-leading support groups. She regularly observes a domestic violence group at Concept 90 Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Center. 90% of all women with substance addictions have been victims of domestic violence.

After graduation Emily is moving to San Diego. She plans to work full time in a social services job for one year before going for her MSW. Emily is looking forward to her career in social work, as she will be able to help people in practical ways. She hopes to find a job working with refugees or mexican immigrants. Emily dreams of helping people from other cultures get settled in the United States without losing their heritage. She wants to assist her future clients in developing programs to share their culture with the rest of the United States.

LIFE AFTER GRADUATION: *tips for pursuing the next step in your professional development*

By Audrey Martin

Starting to plan for life after graduation can never start soon enough. As a senior, it can be overwhelming to sort through whether you will attend graduate school right away, enter the work force, or serve in the mission field. In order to help social work students prepare for the next step, here are some tips to help make the post-graduation preparation easier and less overwhelming.

1 Start planning early. If possible, research graduate schools in your junior year so you are knowledgeable about application deadlines and requirements. You will be in your senior placement in the spring of your senior year, so any research you can do ahead of time will help you to fit the application preparations into your busy schedule!

2 (First Year–Junior Year) Research organizations that work with a particular population that interests you. Try to find the qualifications necessary for that position (whether it may be a graduate degree, etc.) Network with social workers in that field and ask to meet with them and find out more about their work.

3 (First Year–Senior Year) Seek out opportunities in the field to add to your resumé to make yourself

4 marketable in the job hunt. For example, you could be a babysitter and provide respite care for foster children through Adoption Links in Harrisburg or work at The Second Mile Camp over the summer for at-risk youth. Experiences like these will help you stand out when searching for a job.

5 Seek out mentors who are already in the field and seek their advice (possibly field supervisors).

6 Use the Career Center as a resource for further developing your resumé and career planning.

7 Create a list of pros and cons about each pathway. Consider location, current relationships, desired professional goals, etc.

Pray about where God is leading you and rest assured that no matter what path you take, He will always be by your side. There is no “right” or “wrong” decision!

Hopefully these tips will be helpful. Use the senior social work majors as a resource throughout your time in the social work program. They have been through all the classes and will be able to give you advice on being prepared for what is ahead. Plus, they are glad to help!

Following God’s call to serve others

Something that we as Phi Alpha members all have in common is a desire to follow God’s call to serve others. In keeping with this desire, we strive to involve ourselves in service opportunities as a group whenever possible. During the fall 2008 semester Phi Alpha was able to take part in serving a meal to a group of students from an after-school program sponsored by New Hope ministries. We cooked up a delicious, home-made Thanksgiving meal, complete with turkey, stuffing, sweet potatoes, and pies. Local grocery stores were gracious enough to donate some of the supplies and ingredients, which was a huge blessing to us and to the students. We had more than enough food, and were even able to send the leftovers home with some of the families. It was a wonderful opportunity to reach out to others while connecting as a Phi Alpha group as well!

This spring we have a few additional service projects planned. On April 18, we will be going to Bethesda Women’s Shelter in Harrisburg to cook up another (hopefully) scrumptious meal for the women and children there. We will also be holding a clothing drive on campus in April, with the hopes of getting other Messiah students involved with Phi Alpha. Phi Alpha will also be assisting with a St. Patrick’s Day Lunch at the YWCA on March 10.

We look forward to these events and for how God will hopefully use us as his vessels for service through our common love for social work.



Phi Alpha members serving dinner at New Hope Ministries in the fall

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Grantham, PA 17027

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INTERDEPENDENT

news from the Messiah College
social work program

Social Work club

By Amanda Nissley

The social work club has been growing and expanding this year. This year social work club and Phi Alpha have been working together to continue unifying upper class and under class social work majors. The social work club has held a number of meetings each semester and has high participation in meetings.

Currently social work club is working with Phi Alpha to plan an alternate chapel for the campus. Social work club is also working with Phi Alpha on a service opportunity. We plan on serving at Bethesda Women's Shelter during the semester.

Jessanna Hall: Barnabas Award Recipient '09



One of the recipients of the 2009 Barnabas Servant Leadership Award is one of our very own senior social work majors, Jessanna Hall.

According to the Messiah's Agapé Center, who awards this great honor:

"The award is named for Barnabas, who as a servant leader sold land in Cyprus to buy food for the post-Pentecost crowd in Jerusalem, recruited Paul for ministry, worked with Paul as a missionary, mentored John Mark, and led a multicultural pastoral team in Antioch. The name Barnabas means "son of encouragement." The award, in association with the Barney II and Moore Foundations, takes his name as it serves as an effective instrument to the entire educational community by promoting the ideals of service that substantially benefits others."

Each year, Messiah College's Agapé Center awards this honor to one senior and one faculty member, seeking to honor their voluntary service to the community in which they thrive. The factors considered when selecting a recipient for this award include spiritual maturity and commitment, integration of ministry with other aspects of life, and impact of service and ability to respect all persons.