



The UWA Social Worker

Volume 1 Number 1

JUNE 2002

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY
Ms Rosa Catalano

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Mrs Judy Grimshaw

LECTURERS
Ms Violet Bacon
Dr Tom Barrett

HONORARY RESEARCH FELLOW
Dr Christine Choo

LECTURER
Clare, Mrs Brenda

DISCIPLINE CHAIR
Associate Professor
Mike Clare

HONORARY RESEARCH FELLOW
Heather Deighan

SENIOR LECTURER
Dr Maria Harries

HONORARY SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW
Emeritus Professor
Laksiri Jayasuriya

HONORARY RESEARCH FELLOW
Adjunct Professor
Denis Ladbrook

SENIOR LECTURER
Ms Rae Lindsay

LECTURERS
Dr Paul Murphy
Dr Susan Young

FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES PHONE:
9390 2996

SOCIAL WORK OFFICE: 9380 2996

FAX: 9380 1070

EMAIL ADDRESS:
Social Work office:
social.work@uwa.edu.au.

HOME PAGE: [www.arts.edu.au/
SocWkWWW/](http://www.arts.edu.au/SocWkWWW/)

NEWSLETTER INQUIRIES/
CONTRIBUTIONS:
pipwhite@cyllene.uwa.edu.au

WELCOME to the inaugural edition of *The UWA Social Worker*.

This newsletter is primarily a bulletin for graduates, staff, students past and present, field educators and associates. It provides an opportunity for people with an interest in the UWA Discipline of Social Work to keep up to date with current events, and is intended as a forum for matters affecting our social work community. We plan to publish three editions per year and hope to be able to re-establish contact with some of the growing number of our graduates. The first edition is largely concerned with the recognition of a variety of achievements by staff and students. It also includes updates on community projects, providing a snapshot of just some the diverse array of UWA social work community initiatives and involvement.

2001 was an important year for social work at UWA, one aspect being a name change from 'Department' to 'Discipline'. We are now officially known as the Discipline of Social Work and Social Policy, within the School of Social and Cultural Studies. The name change reflects the intention of the recent university restructure to encourage inter-Disciplinary, inter-School and inter-Faculty research and teaching networks.

We are looking forward to the launch our revised and more comprehensive website in the coming months. This initiative will increase our capacity to inform students, academic practitioners and agency managers about developments in the Discipline. *The UWA Social Worker* will also be available on our forthcoming website.

*Associate Professor Mike Clare
Chair of Discipline*



Associate Professor
Mike Clare

Healthy Student Numbers

Student numbers remain strong in 2002 with 15 students in Year One, 25 in Year Two, 55 in Year Three and 56 in Year Four. Our 'Chair of Discipline', Associate Professor Mike Clare, says a regulating mechanism is planned to influence admissions to each of the first three years of the BSW programme. Mike has been working with Veronica Coram to prepare a report on this issue for the Board of Studies, and will make recommendations for Admissions 2003. At postgraduate level, we have over 30 students – most of whom are enrolled in a PhD programme, for which Dr Maria Harries has overall responsibility, including a seminar/peer support programme. We are pleased to welcome 10 new postgraduate students in 2002.

Top Course

We were pleased to discover that our Four Year BSW program was ranked first by the 2000 graduates in the results of the Course Experience Questionnaire. Of the Two Plus Two Year Programmes, UWA's BSW course was ranked second, in results published last year.

The Discipline was recently visited by the Accreditation Panel of the professional association with responsibility for reading course documentation and consulting with teaching staff, students, employers and supervisors. The Panel's recommendation is that the BSW programme at UWA should be accredited for a further period of five years. We have since received confirmation of the decision by the National Executive of the professional association. Mike Clare has been working with recent graduate Wayne Brush to draft a set of 'Regulations for Entry' to capture the long-standing reality of undergraduate and post-graduate entry processes and pathways in our regulations.

Staffing Changes

Changes to the Social Work Discipline staff line-up include the half-time appointments of Ms Brenda Clare and Dr Paul Murphy in June 2001.

Dr Sue Young returned from New Zealand to take up a full-time position in February this year. Ms Rae Lindsay has moved to a 0.6 position and Dr Maria Harries has moved to a 0.8 position. Dr Tom Barrett has been awarded study leave for 2002 and will be attending the Third Annual Conference on Family Care with the theme: *Empowerment Through Innovation* in Washington DC in October. Tom plans to attend the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Gerontology in Montreal in the same month. The theme is *Ageing and Society; Taking Charge of the Future*. Tom will also visit the University of Toronto and Wilfred Laurier Schools of Social Work. Following this, he will meet with the Departments of Domestic Violence in Nashville and Johnson City, Tennessee, to study their programmes and policies regarding elder abuse.

Welcome back to Vi Bacon, whose recent study leave in 2001 saw her visit universities in New Zealand, Canada and Melbourne. The focus of Vi's study leave was Indigenous issues relevant to social work, and 'Just



Violet Bacon

Therapy' and 'Narrative Therapy' approaches to working with Australian Indigenous people. Vi attended many conferences and seminars during her leave – she says one of the highlights was the challenging intensive Narrative Therapy workshop at the Dulwich Centre in Adelaide. Vi says her study leave presented her with an opportunity to review and reflect on social work at UWA, and she has returned with recommendations for changes designed to enhance the BSW course.

Successful Research Symposium

Last year also saw us host a research symposium at Currie Hall, held in partnership with the AASW (WA Branch) Education Committee and colleagues from Curtin and Edith Cowan Universities. The purpose of the symposium was to encourage agencies to apply for research funding, and the outcome was a resounding success. In partnership with the Discipline, over \$120,000 in funding for four research projects with Anglicare, Family Focus and Ngala has been secured. Mike Clare says he would like to maintain UWA's involvement in an annual research workshop as part of the Discipline's commitment to generating research partnerships with agencies. Another Workshop has been included in the Winter School 2002.

Social Work UWA to Evaluate Familyfocus Programme

Brenda Clare has been contracted to perform an evaluation for the Lotteries Commission on the *Dads and Kids Together* programme, run by Perth agency Familyfocus Inc. Familyfocus was set up in 2000 by UWA BSW graduate Jenny Terry and two colleagues. Following Lotteries Commission funding approval in 2001, Jenny implemented the unique *Dads and Kids Together* program, which works with non-residential fathers and their children aged 7-11 years. The programme is about attachment between fathers and their children and, with secure attachment being one of the primary building blocks of resilience, Jenny says this model informs all her work with children. Jenny is currently working on her Masters degree *Resilience in children in out-of-home care*, and uses her theoretical knowledge on resilience to inform the strengths-based nature of the group.

Research Partnerships

Dr Paul Murphy continues to work with colleagues to develop research partnerships across a wide range of agency settings. In October 2001 the Accreditation Panel of the AASW recognised this as a significant and innovative strength of the Discipline. One of the major



Paul Murphy

projects developed by Paul saw the successful tendering for the preparation of an options paper on Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse. With WA as the only Australian State not under mandatory reporting legislation, the final report will serve an important role in informing policy development in this area.

Another project currently under evaluation by Paul is the innovative Columbus Project with the Family Court. Columbus is a differential case management system for dealing with cases of domestic violence and child abuse. Families involved in the pilot project have their journey through the court system managed by a series of conferences jointly chaired by a Court Registrar and a Family Court Counselling Service representative. Early reports indicate that the project is having a significant impact on the culture of the Family Court and the way it does business. Columbus may well provide a model for the planned restructuring of the Family Court of Australia.

Staff News

A series of well-earned congratulations are due to a number of staff members:



Dr Christine Choo

Congratulations to **DR CHRISTINE CHOO** on the publication of her book, *Mission Girls – Aboriginal Women on Catholic Missions in the Kimberley, Western Australia, 1900-1950*, by The University of Western Australia Press. Besides her successful publication, Christine has also helped us in our recent Honours benchmarking exercise and is working on an evaluation project in the Goldfields.

Congratulations to **BRENDA CLARE** who was awarded one of the eight grants from the Teaching and Learning Committee for her project *Enhancing Professional Education Through On-Site Practice Teaching and Learning*. Brenda's work will enable us to offer additional mentoring



Brenda Clare

and support to new placement supervisors in 2003. The Discipline is currently exploring possibilities for incorporating fieldwork supervision as a component of a Graduate Diploma in Social Work.

Brenda is also in the process of writing up her PhD research at the present time.

Her thesis deals with the development of professional identity of social workers and focuses on the 'learning journey' of students – exploring how well-equipped new graduates feel as beginning practitioners. Brenda is hoping to submit her thesis early in 2003.

Congratulations to **DR MARIA HARRIES** whose PhD thesis on the privatisation of human services was accepted in April this year. Maria says that while the human services sector has largely attempted to accommodate privatisation and competitive tendering, there should be ongoing concern about which services should be privatised. Recognising the tension inherent in a market-driven model of welfare provision, Maria says we need to articulate the risks of the on-going move towards total privatisation of human services.

Maria is currently involved in a number of projects, including her work with MercyCare, where she has been a Board member for two years. The MercyCare organisation encompasses three divisions of acute hospital care: Mercy Hospital, aged care and services for family and children (incorporating employment). In March this year the organisation transferred to lay 'ownership' as a Public Juridic Person, and Maria accepted the role of inaugural lay Chairperson. Maria says she loves her involvement with MercyCare because the organisation captures the centrality of its mission statement: "Bringing compassion to life".

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR DENIS LADBROOK and **MS HEATHER DEIGHEN** are currently working on their community development project in South Africa and are planning to develop similar projects in Australia. Besides the initial community development project, which sought to generate local employment opportunities in two townships, the project has grown to include an important AIDS initiative. Heather and Denis' approach to community development through employment is an exciting addition to current community development theory and practice.

Some of **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MIKE CLARE**'s more recent work has included the introduction of the Looking After Children (LAC) Project with the Department for Community Development and the non-government child welfare agencies. The LAC system provides children in out-of-home care with a structured framework for the recording of vital personal information and a mechanism for the planning of their care. Implemented in response to the problem of the loss of children's personal histories, this innovative model seeks to underpin best practice principles in the out-of-home care experience.

DR TOM BARRETT and **MS RAE LINDSAY** are currently undertaking a funded research project with the Department of Veterans' Affairs examining the issues



Dr Tom Barrett

facing relinquishing carers following the death or permanent placement of the person for whom they were caring. Tom is also researching the needs of rural and remote carers in WA in conjunction with Carers WA.

If any students, especially intending honours students, have an interest in the field of ageing, and are considering research in this area, please see Tom or Rae. They may be able to assist you in conceptualising your ideas.

Book Launches

Congratulations to **MS RAE LINDSAY**, whose book, *Recognizing Spirituality: The Interface Between Faith and Social*



Rae Lindsay

Work, will be launched at the opening of the AASW Conference in September this year. Rae's book, which explores the stages of faith development and their relevance to social work, presents views of both social work practitioners and educators. Rae argues that it is impossible for social work to claim a holistic perspective while ignoring spirituality – especially in a multicultural society such as Australia.



Dr Sue Young

Congratulations to **DR SUE YOUNG**, whose book *Solving Social Problems: Southern Solutions*, written with Professor Pat Shannon from Otago University, will also be launched at the AASW Conference. Sue's book is a third-year text for social work and welfare studies students, and provides a theoretical and practical approach to assisting people affected by contemporary social problems. Using information and case studies from Australia and New Zealand, the book provides students with the opportunity to examine different ways they may assist in the process of social change.

Research Colleagues

We are very fortunate to have a group of supportive and productive Honorary Research colleagues. Emeritus Professor Laksiri Jayasuriya continues to be a stimulating and



Professor
Laksiri Jayasuriya

supportive presence – and was centrally involved in mounting the very successful Centenary of Federation Symposium, *Constituting a People: The Legacy of White Australia* in December last year. Professor Jayasuriya has also been appointed to a steering committee charged with responsibility for guiding the development of WA's Anti-Racism Strategy. Reflecting Laki's active contribution to the field of human rights, he presented papers on Australian Racism at the Canberra 2001 and Sydney 2002 HREOC Conferences on Racism. The papers are available on the HREOC website at: www.humanrights.gov.au/worldconference Laki was also invited to launch the Perth community-based network Human Rights WA in May this year.

Course Electives Review

In 2001, PhD student Katrina Stratton was invited to conduct a study with current BSW students to investigate their views of the Faculty of Arts electives undertaken in



Katrina Stratton

their first two years of the course. Thank you to all those students who participated in the project. Individual surveys and focus group discussions provided the information for Katrina's analysis, which was discussed at the November 2001 Board of Studies meeting. This will be an important component of our review of existing prescribed electives – and will inform any plans for designing new Disciplined elective units in the coming academic year.

Honorary Visiting Research Fellows

In March this year were visited by Associate Professor Carol Stalker from the Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada, where she teaches clinical social work courses. Carol met with a colloquium of staff and postgraduate students at the UWA social work discipline, and presented fascinating overview of her work with survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

We were also pleased to welcome Associate Professor Kristjana Kristiansen, from the Department of Social Work and Health Sciences at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, as an Honorary Visiting Research Fellow in April this year. During her visit, Krisjana presented two well-received papers for the AASW under the title *Women and Insanity* and talked with staff at Disability Services and NGOs about disability policy in Norway. Krisjana also lectured to the Third Year students in their Developmental Practice unit and presented a seminar to the to staff and postgraduate on her ethnographic research with women with mental illness.

Student Achievements

Congratulations are due to **DR MARK SACHMAN** on achieving his doctorate with distinction for his well-received study, *"A critical examination of the nosological status of borderline personality disorders with particular reference to the aetiological significance of childhood trauma"*.

Congratulations to a number of our recent graduates – for a variety of reasons. – First of all, to **SUE BAILEY** who was awarded the Margaret Stockbridge Memorial Prize, the Jayasuriya Prize and the Convocation Prize. Sue was also awarded an Australian Postgraduate Scholarship to undertake her PhD studies in 2002.

Congratulations also to **JOANNE WATSON** who was awarded the Walter Tauss Memorial Prize in Social Work Practice and to **JENNIFER NOONAN** who was awarded the Walter Tauss Memorial Prize in Indigenous Studies.

Congratulations to **NICOLA FARRAY** and to **PIP WHITE** on their award of Australian Postgraduate Scholarships to undertake their PhD studies with us in 2002. Congratulations to **EVE STUBBER** and to **JOANNE WATSON** who achieved First Class Honours results.

Congratulations to **SHELLEY SKINNER** for her work as Liaison Officer with *Beyond for Kids* – a self-funded voluntary organisation working with children of parents with a mental illness; the organisation works to encourage peer group support and understanding among the children and families through various social and recreational activities.

Finally, in this review of the achievements of our recent graduates, congratulations to **NANCY CARBONE** who participated in the Community Drug Summit as a community delegate. Nancy felt that her participation was a very productive opportunity to work to develop key recommendations for government consideration.

Congratulations to a number of Fourth Year students whose work was recognised last year. Firstly, **KERRY BREUHWILER** received a commendation in the West Australian newspaper for her voluntary work at the June O'Connor Centre. Whilst volunteering at the Centre, Kerry successfully put forward a submission to a major Western Australian Petroleum company on behalf of the Centre leading to the provision of furniture and office equipment.

STEVEN FEEHAN received a cadetship from the Department of Employment, Work Relations and Small Business under their National Indigenous Cadetship Project. The Cadetship involved Steven undertaking paid work experience and training with a family agency in Canberra for 11 weeks over the summer break. Steven was particularly involved with the Aboriginal Parenting Skills Programme and was able to concentrate on his area of interest, namely working with Aboriginal youth.

LARA MILLER was awarded one of five available Rotary Study Exchange Fellowships to visit Sweden for five weeks in May, 2001. Lara visited schools and local government agencies to speak with police, drug and alcohol workers and youth workers and was able to explore another welfare system to develop a more global perspective of Social Work.

Finally, congratulations to **SHERYL WONG**, a current Third Year student, who attended the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa in 2001. Sheryl was invited by the UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (Anti-Discrimination Unit) to join the panel at a gathering commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March in Geneva.

In the Field

Fifty-six Fourth Year students have recently finished their final field work placement of 16 weeks duration. We look forward to receiving some feedback on their experiences for the next edition of *The UWA Social Worker*. Fifty-five Third Year students will commence their 12-week placement on 17 June. We wish them all the best on their first foray into the field of social work. Brenda Clare is the Lecturer in Charge of Fieldwork for 2002.

Fieldwork Supervisors Honoured

Continuing our tradition of recognising the contribution of field supervisors who have provided at least seven placements to UWA students, we welcome 12 new social workers to the Honour roll. At a gathering in October last year at University House, Emeritus Professor Laksiri Jayasuriya recognised the substantial contribution of the following social worker supervisors whose names are now on the Honour Board, located next to Social Work Admin Office:

David Buchanan	Celine Harrison
Lucy Davies	Bill Herd
Jo Delaney	Robyn Kerr
Marcia Foley	Sue Lodge-Calvert
Neil Fowler	Francis Lynch
Cindy Gorton	Warren Smailes

The New UWA Local Drug Action Group

A state-wide network of Local Drug Action Groups (LDAGs) develop interventions designed to reduce the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs. A UWA LDAG group, convened on 5 June 2002, will work collaboratively with other groups on campus to develop and implement strategies unique to the UWA community. All UWA students and staff are welcome to attend and participate. The next meeting is 12.30 to 1.30pm on Wednesday, 3 July, 2002 – venue to be advised.

The UWA LDAG contact person is Patricia Wylde, Phone 9380 3989 or email pwylde@admin.uwa.edu.au

Youth Leadership Training Opportunities

STUDENTS: take note of the exciting youth leadership opportunities within the Local Drug Action Group network, for participants aged 15 to 24. LDAG's Fogarty Foundation training programs take place over a two-day period and offer participants skills training in the facilitation of youth programs in the alcohol and other drug field. For more information phone Grant Akesson on 9370 0331 or email grant.akesson@health.wa.gov.au

AASW State Conference: 30th September – 2nd October 2002

The theme of this year's State Conference is *'Working across borders, stretch your mind: strengthen your practice: the nexus between practice and education'*. This event is to be held jointly by the AASW and the National Conference of the Australian Association of Social Work and Welfare Educators (AASWWE) and is an opportunity to accrue Continuing Professional Development points. Early reports indicate the papers and workshops on offer will comprise an excellent opportunity to explore the challenges in social work education and practice.

Oral History Association of Australia WA Branch Annual Conference

The annual conference of the Oral History Association will be held on Saturday, 24 August, 2002, at the City of Armadale Function Room, Armadale. Dr Maria Harries



Dr Maria Harries

will present the closing paper: *"Recognising the Need for Support and Counselling for Interviewees"*. For further information contact the OHAA on 9375 1017.

Last Word

We hope you have enjoyed the first edition of *The UWA Social Worker*. In forthcoming editions we hope to personalise the face of our Discipline with the inclusion of contributions from a range of people associated with Social Work at UWA. Please forward to the editor any news, personal reflections, experiences, notices or information that may be of interest. Plans for future editions of *The UWA Social Worker* include personal profiles and information about people in the Discipline. What can you contribute?

As members and student members of a profession grounded in the concept of community, we know the value of inclusive, effective systems of communication. We invite you to contribute to the newsletter and help build a more cohesive UWA social work community. Contributions can be sent to the editor, Pip White at pipwhite@cyllene.uwa.edu.au or via the UWA Social Work office.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

UWA Winter School

The inaugural UWA Social Work and Social Policy Winter School has enjoyed a promising start. A joint initiative between the UWA Social Work Discipline and the AASW, the Winter School offers a varied program of postgraduate units. The workshops are designed to address post-qualifying continuing professional education needs of postgraduate students, AASW members, individual practitioner and their employers. Those interested in enrolling should make haste, as workshop places are limited. The program schedule includes:

DATE	WORKSHOP	CONVENOR
Monday 10 June	Families and Drugs	Mike Clare
Wednesday 12 June	Ethical Decision Making	Maria Harries
Saturday 15 June	Issues in Community Development Practice	Sue Young
Monday 24 June and Tuesday 25 June	Thinking Theoretically	Brenda Clare
Friday 28 June	Loss and Grief	Ray Lindsay
Monday 1 July	Intro to Family Court Processes	Paul Murphy
Thursday 20 June and Friday 21 June	Delivering Effective Professional Supervision (Pt 1)	Mike Clare
Monday 15 July and Tuesday 16 July	Delivering Effective Professional Supervision (Pt 2)	Mike Clare
Thursday 27 June, Friday 28 June and Friday 19 July	Starting a Practice Research Culture	Paul Murphy
Thursday 11 July, Friday 12 July and Saturday 13 July	Social Workers and Mental Health Practice	Maria Harries

The Winter School is planned as an annual event. Inquiries should be directed to:

Meredith Doyle on 9332 0019
or at aaswwa@highway1.com.au

