



The Field Flyer

Where in the world is Nancy Kelly?!

As most of you know, I retired from the School of Social Work this past October. For those of you who may not know, I arrived in September of 1992 with a 3 year old daughter and a 5 year old Springer Spaniel in tow. The warmth, acceptance and support from colleagues, students and community members convinced me to stay and make Maine my home. I have been privileged to work with so many amazing students, and providers in agency communities. I have been extremely fortunate to have worked with wonderful colleagues. I have learned and gained so much from all of you. Some of you know that my spouse Kate and I have been planning this exit for the past 3 years. Due to COVID we needed to postpone Kate's dream of an overseas retirement trip and thanks to the broken transmission on our 2003 VW Rialta camper, we needed to postpone our cross-country National Park trip. Both of these will happen in the next two years. We hope.

What we did accomplish was our move to a 55-plus co-housing community in Durham, North Carolina. We started working with people from around the country to create the first LGBTQA Senior cohousing community in the spring of 2018 and we received our certificate of occupancy in May, just in time for us to sell our home in Stockton Springs, finish our jobs and move before winter--if you can call the 70-degree temperature here on Sunday winter! We are enjoying the work needed to keep our community thriving. There are many meetings, and even though we live next door to each other, those meetings are via Zoom. Everyone LOVES Elsa and Maggie and we all have settled in comfortably. It is a lot of work, but it's worth it to be in a community with smart and loving people all working toward the same goal of aging in place and celebrating our lives and our caring for each other. Here is the link to our website if you want to see what it looks like <https://www.villagehearthcohousing.com/> or check us out on Facebook.



Greetings from the Field Director

What a year we have all faced so far. Today, I am hopeful about the spring and summer, with increasing availability of vaccines and reduced case counts in our state. From the beginning of this pandemic, our students, faculty, and partner agencies have made dramatic shifts in our daily lives and the way in which we conduct our work. At the same time, the core values of the NASW Code of Ethics have never been more relevant.

Teaching an MSW field seminar class this summer, I was privileged to see many examples of service in the work of our students and partners, particularly with those isolated as a result of the pandemic. I witnessed the importance of human relationships as students maintained connection with clients, field instructors, and each other through technology. Students demonstrated competence, and integrity, as they learned to balance multiple and competing priorities in their personal and professional lives, no easy feat in any year. Later in this issue, I review an article about the role Field Instructors can play in teaching and modeling self-care to students. I am so grateful to all of our community partners, and our students, for demonstrating the adaptability, resilience, and tenacity of our profession. Thank you!

This year, as many of you may know, we had several changes in our field department. Deirdre Finney Boylan, Belfast Site Coordinator, retired in June and Nancy Kelly, Field Director, retired in October. Both Deirdre and Nancy will be greatly missed.

Today, I welcome you to the inaugural issue of the Field Flyer, the newsletter of the UMaine School of Social Work Field Department. I hope this newsletter will prove to be a useful communication tool and keeping you informed about field education. We'd love to hear from you too! Write to leah.maxwell@maine.edu with your updates and news.

School of Social Work

MISSION

The mission of the University of Maine School of Social Work is to improve the quality of life for all people by promoting excellence in social work practice. We view the domain of social work as the promotion of social justice, celebration of diversity, elimination of oppression, and promotion of human achievement and wellbeing of people across the entire life span, all of which are essential characteristics of a society in which individuals and groups can exercise their rights to grow and realize their potential to its fullest.

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ABOUT UMAINE

The University of Maine, founded in Orono in 1865, is the state's premier public university. It is among the most comprehensive higher education institutions in the Northeast and attracts students from across the U.S. and 65 countries. It currently enrolls nearly 11,000 total undergraduate and graduate students. UMaine students directly participate in groundbreaking research working with world-class scholars. The University of Maine offers doctoral degrees in 35 fields, representing the humanities, sciences, engineering and education; master's degrees in nearly 70 disciplines; 90 undergraduate majors and academic programs; and one of the oldest and most prestigious honors programs in the U.S. The university promotes environmental stewardship on its campus, with substantial efforts aimed at conserving energy, recycling and adhering to green building standards in new construction.

For more information about UMaine, visit umaine.edu.

Welcome Robin Whitney



The School of Social Work welcomed a new BSW Assistant Field Coordinator, Robin Whitney, on July 1, 2020. Robin has deep practice experience in child welfare; she worked for the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for thirty years, first as an eligibility specialist, and then in child protection since 1999. Her final position with DHHS was as the Child Welfare Program Administrator for Penobscot and Piscataquis counties, supervising eighty child protective workers at a time. She has dedicated her career to safety for children and families, especially within their own homes.

Robin received her undergraduate degree in Child Development and Family Relations in 1998 and graduated with her MSW in 2010, both from the University of Maine. She later served as a field instructor for countless students, becoming recipient of the School of Social Work Alumni of the Year Award in 2019. Robin will be an integral part of the School's Field Team, with primary responsibility for BSW students as the instructor of SWK 395, Junior Field. We are very excited to have her join the School of Social Work community.

Welcome Kayla Rodriguez



Kayla Rodriguez, LCSW, joined the School of Social Work on October 1, 2020, as the new Distance Program Coordinator. Kayla comes to us from Denver Colorado where she has been working for the last four years in the University of Denver's Health and Counseling Center as both a counselor and coordinator of advocacy services. Kayla received her MSW from the University of Denver and her BSW from Colorado State University. Her professional experience involves micro, mezzo and macro level settings and interventions, including an active telehealth practice.

Kayla coordinates the Online-Blended MSW Program, in collaboration with the MSW Coordinator, and became a member of our three-person Field Team. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, camping, trying new recipes, traveling, and reading historical fiction! Following her experience out West, Kayla and her husband knew they wanted to live closer to the ocean and were grateful to find wonderful opportunities in Maine. We are excited to welcome her to the University of Maine and introduce her to our infamous New England winters!

Student Spotlight: Jasmine Olivares Field Agency: Upward Bound



Jasmine Olivares is a fourth-year BSW student living in the University of Maine community. Originally from San Antonio, Texas, Jasmine has found meaningful friendships within the undergraduate program and now lives with a fellow Social Work student and their cat. A fun fact about Jasmine is that she's been crafting her own Halloween costumes for the past three years! This year, Jasmine is completing her senior rotation of field experience at Upward Bound, a program located on the UMaine Orono campus. Upward Bound helps high school students in the Bangor, Millinocket, and Portland areas with college admission assistance, academic support, career exploration, community service, and cultural activities. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Upward Bound Counselors would travel across the state to host in-person workshops with students. With the ability to congregate remotely, the number of workshops hosted by the organization has increased; in fact, Jasmine plans at least one workshop per week.

In the fall, Jasmine planned a voting workshop to inform high school students on voter registration and general election knowledge. She's also coordinated cultural activities by creating virtual museum tours and recently hosted a group skills workshop to teach team dynamic and leadership skills. As a first-generation college student herself, Jasmine has provided her agency with a meaningful perspective that allows her to consistently use a person-centered approach.

While Upward Bound continues to provide services remotely, they are always looking for UMaine students to volunteer as Academic Coaches. Students from all majors on campus can apply to be an Academic Coach, who work closely with Upward Bound high schoolers by providing trainings, workshops, and direct tutoring. Jasmine strongly encourages her fellow students to consider volunteering their time.

Student Spotlight: Brittney Beaulieu

Field Agency: The University of Maine Center on Aging



Brittney Beaulieu is an MSW student in our distance program. An aspiring therapist from Madawaska, Brittney personal passion for learning about NASA, and the mental health evaluations that astronauts partake in pre and post-space travel! Brittney completed her generalist field practicum in December at the UMaine Center on Aging. The Center on Aging's mission is "to promote and facilitate activities on aging in the areas of education, research and evaluation, and community service to maximize the quality of life of older citizens and their families in Maine and beyond."

Brittney completed extensive research for the UMCOA on age-friendly communities and utilized her experienced writing and data coding skills. One of Brittney's bucket list items was to be published. At the UMCOA, she's been able to make progress on this goal. Brittney has two articles approved for publication and has one more on the way. In addition, Brittney has also helped advance the Center on Aging's Lifelong Community Fellows program by interviewing local community members and leaders about their experiences with the organization.

Book Nook

Favorite News Sources – Sandra Butler, PhD, Professor, Director and MSW Coordinator

I read (in paper copy, no less) the *Bangor Daily News*, daily. I especially like the op-eds. For example, Amy Fried, a Professor of Political Science at UM, writes a bi-weekly op-ed providing political analysis that I particularly like. Another series of op-eds I enjoy are ones that are written by the Maine Chapter of the Scholars Strategy Network. This SSN group is made up of scholars from around the state who write op-eds on a variety of topics every other Wednesday.

I also will read articles in professional journals that I receive that are in topics that are of interest to me. For example, I recently received the *Maine Policy Review* that is put out by the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center on campus. There are a couple of articles in the most recent issue that I plan to read regarding the Native American experience in Maine: "Indigenous Voices Charting a Course Beyond" the Bicentennial by Gail Dana-Sacco, and "A Call for Repairing the Harms of Colonization", by Erika Arthur and Penthea Burns. Penthea is an MSW graduate from our program from many years ago who works at the Muskie Institute at USM now. Digital availability from <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mpr/>.

The Compassion Fatigue Workbook: Creative Tools for Transforming Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Traumatization – Review by Ann Hartman, LCSW, Faculty Liaison

The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet" (Remen, 1996).

In the Specialization Year Field Seminar classes, our text, *The Compassion Fatigue Workbook: Creative Tools for Transforming Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Traumatization*, provides a strong foundation for discussion, reflection and practice of self-care. Research shows that social workers who are new to the field are at particular risk of developing compassion fatigue and secondary trauma, and that increasing awareness of compassion satisfaction and self-care practices reduces risks (Harr, et al., 2014). During the first semester of field seminar, we work our way through each chapter of the workbook which takes students from the compelling reasons why self-care is so critical to our profession, to practical strategies and considerations on the individual and organizational levels. Students complete exercises each week from the workbook, which include having discussions with seasoned social workers in the field about their own self-care, assessing their own levels of compassion fatigue and stresses in their professional and personal lives, and experimenting with a variety of self-care strategies. Students learn a low-impact debriefing process they practice with each other in class, and they consider their needs in their transition from work to home. Students participate in relaxation exercises inside and outside of class, and they develop a self-care plan they share with their field instructor as a way to enlist support to truly use it in their field placement. The text has been a gift to our students; it is full of honest perspectives from social workers and other helping professionals in the field. In this way, our students are better prepared to mitigate the risks of compassion fatigue and secondary trauma in their field placements and post-graduation.

Harr, C. R., Brice, T. S., Riley, K., & Moore, B. (2014). The impact of compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction on social work students. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 5(2), 233-251.

Perceptions of Self-Care Among MSW Students: Implications for Social Work Education – Review by Leah Maxwell, LCSW, Field Director

This qualitative research article examined the perceptions of self-care held by MSW students in a mid-Atlantic university. The authors asked participants two primary research questions: "What does self-care mean to social work students?" and "What self-care materials do students want to have included in their social work courses?" (p.660)". Student responses to their understanding of self-care were categorized into five primary areas: health, time, activities, balance, and professionalism. Students considered health to include physical, mental, emotional and spiritual contexts; while, perhaps as no surprise, time was viewed as a precious commodity and time away from school, field and employment responsibilities was mentioned frequently. Activities of self-care were broadly conceptualized by respondents as doing something concrete that was enjoyable and positive, while balance was defined as being able to integrate the multiple roles held by students in their lives. Students also saw self-care as a professional practice that better allowed them to serve their clients and prevent burnout. Students indicated three major categories when considering desire for self-care content: Academic program experiences, self-care resources, and self-care modeling, particularly strategies they could use during their field practicum or employment settings. Students asked for resources and strategies that were time-limited, practical and realistic. Implications of the research suggested MSW programs consider incorporating explicit assignments and modeling of self-care in MSW program academic and field experiences.

Diebold, J., Kim, W. & Elze, D. (2018) Perceptions of self-care among MSW students: Implications for social work education. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 54(4), 657-667. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2018.1486255>

Interest in Hosting a Field Student?

The Field Team has begun our field placement process for the upcoming year. You will likely recall the excitement and anticipation that surrounded your field practicum experience. We are currently seeking knowledgeable and compassionate volunteers to host BSW and MSW students for the 2021-2022 year.

Are you interested in hosting a social work student this coming year? Complete the Agency Information Form on our website: <https://umaine.edu/socialwork/university-maine-school-social-work-agency-information-form/>

This will ensure we have the most accurate information about your agency to share with interested students.

We also welcome direct inquiries to our Field Director, Leah Maxwell, who can be reached via email at leah.maxwell@maine.edu or by phone at 207-581-2378.

Can we count on you this year?

Connect on Facebook!

Have you joined the **UMaine Social Work Alumni, Students, Faculty & Friends** Facebook group?

Open to all BSW & MSW Alumni, Students, Faculty and Friends of the School of Social Work, this group is a place to connect, share resources, and keep us all updated on what you've been doing.

March is Social Work Month 2021



Thank you to our BSW Social Work Field Unit Student Camille DeSilva!

This inaugural issue of the Field Flyer could not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our BSW Social Work Field Unit Student Camille DeSilva. Thank you Camille!

Photographs of students not wearing masks were taken prior to the coronavirus pandemic. The University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias follow federal and state Centers for Disease Control and Prevention health and safety guidance, which includes social distancing and use of face coverings for the start of the 2020-21 academic year.

The University of Maine does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, 581.1226, eoinfo@umit.maine.edu.

Student Spotlight: Katrina Mercer Field Agency: Bangor Vet Center

Katrina Mercer is a fourth-year student from the School's MSW Campus program. Originally from Brockport, New York, Katrina has lived in many different parts of the country; she earned her Bachelor's in Hotel Management from Johnson and Wales University Denver Campus and began working in the hospitality industry shortly after. It didn't take long for Katrina to realize she belonged in the human service helping profession. With a role model like her mother, who returned to higher education for two separate Master's degrees, Katrina felt supported to pursue an advanced degree in Social Work. This summer, she moved from Bangor to Garland, Maine.



Katrina is placed at the community-based Bangor Vet Center for her specialization year field practicum. The team she works alongside consists of seven clinicians with LCSW backgrounds, an outreach specialist, and an office manager. Collectively, the team provides counseling services to veterans and their families, specializing in areas such as mourning, military sexual assault, and PTSD. Due to COVID-19, the Center is operating with limited services and hours, with most appointments now meeting via telehealth. One aspect of the Vet Center that Katrina especially admires is its low barrier access to services; clients and their families receive services free-of-charge, so long as they meet the eligibility criteria.

 Kayla Rodriguez	 Meisha Nickerson	 Nicole Yeo Fisher
 Ann Hartman	Meet Our Field Faculty!	 Ralph McPherson
 Judith Josiah Martin	 Deborah Mattson	 Kelly Jaksa
 Sonya Lacoute	 Jennifer Crittenden	 Leah Maxwell