

Connections

A Magazine for Alumni & Friends of the School of Social Work

Grand Challenges for Social Work




Ensure
healthy
development
for all youth



Close the
health gap



Stop
family violence




Advance
long and
productive lives



Eradicate
social
isolation




End
homelessness




Create
social responses
to a changing
environment



Harness
technology
for
social good




Promote
smart
decarceration



Reduce
extreme
economic
inequality



Build
financial
capability
for all



Achieve
equal opportunity
and justice

Achieving Measurable Progress for Society Through Social Work and Science

Taiwanese Delegation Visits SSW

for Insights into Financial Social Work

Two Visiting Professors from Taiwan's Fu Jen Catholic University, including one who is a 1982 alum of the School of Social Work (SSW), visited the School in September to see and learn, first-hand, more about the School's innovative Financial Social Work Initiative.

Drs. Rosa Shioh-hwa Luo, MSW '82, Associate Professor, and Kuei-Pi Lin, Assistant Professor, have a strong interest in and commitment to financial social work and the purpose of their visit was to learn about developments in financial social work, financial capability and asset building (FCAB), and poverty alleviation in general.

While making plans to visit the United States to learn more about financial social work in the U.S., Dr. Shioh-hwa Luo found online that the School of Social Work was the first result in her online search of schools and connected with Dr. Jodi Frey, Associate Professor and Chair of the School's Financial Social Work Initiative, to arrange a visit.

During the three-day visit, the two met with many School and community officials, educators, and non-profit leaders who deal first hand with many clients with financial social work issues. While many of the challenges with financial social work are similar to the United States, i.e., families dealing with child-care, employment, transportation, housing, food and security issues, the approaches to solving these problems can be different.

Drs. Shioh-hwa Luo and Lin worked together to develop a financial social work center. "Our department decided in 2012 to make financial social work a core subject that all students in our undergraduate social work program must learn." The students also take economic classes as part of the curriculum. In 2015, those educational efforts expanded into the development of Taiwan's first Financial Social Work Center. According to Shioh-hwa Luo, "We do training courses for



Visiting Professors Drs. Rosa Shioh-hwa Luo, MSW '82, Associate Professor, and Kuei-Pi Lin visited from Fu Jen Catholic University pictured here courtesy of: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fu_Jen_Catholic_University

social work practitioners and we offer case-based services for families with the need to improve their income status." "Their center has accomplished so much in just one year," says Frey who adds, "It is unbelievable. We have learned a lot."

Dr. Frey also learned of one unique way efforts in Taiwan might be able to be applied here. "They have secured funding from a bank foundation collaboration that gives money to families to seed businesses in the amount of \$20,000. The social workers get involved with about 50 families a year in writing business plans and helping that family be successful whether it be in a food truck business, hair styling, or other service industries. They have success rates of 30 to 40% no longer needing government funding after just a few years."

Dr. Shioh-hwa Luo agrees that the visit was a great success. "I learned a lot! I am 100% satisfied with what we have learned."

Dr. Shioh-hwa Luo came to Maryland from Taiwan in 1980 to study social work after a faculty member she had met in Taiwan recommended she come to the SSW for her degree. She returned to Taiwan in 1985 and worked in city government as a community worker in Taipei. From there she became a city government supervisor of hundreds of social workers in Taiwan. She also did Foundation work where she organized family services efforts. Continuing to expand her social work experiences, Dr. Shioh-hwa Luo worked for several years with the Red Cross Society doing United Way fundraising work that benefited the social work profession in Taiwan. Dr. Shioh-hwa Luo then went on to earn her PhD and began teaching social work at Fu Jen Catholic University.