

FINANCIAL SOCIAL WORK INITIATIVE CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

The [University of Maryland School of Social Work \(UMSSW\)](#) is celebrating the 10th anniversary of its [Financial Social Work Initiative \(FSWI\)](#) during the 2017-2018 academic year with a new Financial Social Work (FSW) Certification Program and numerous activities that honor its achievements over the past 10 years and lay the groundwork for ongoing work in this important, emerging area within social work.

In celebration of this milestone, the FSWI received a leadership grant of \$100,000 from The Woodside Foundation, whose trustee, Meg Woodside, MBA, MSW, UMSSW alumna, is a co-founder of the FSWI. The Woodside Foundation is a private family foundation focusing on program development, outreach, and advocacy in the areas of family financial security and asset building in Maryland. "Social workers have been on the front lines of stabilizing vulnerable families and communities for decades," notes Woodside. "Today's challenges necessitate integrating new tools, skills, and evidence-based practices to strengthen the profession's ability to address financial stressors and economic disparities. As FSWI's 10th anniversary unfolds, we will be able to offer several new opportunities to engage even more social workers in financial social work."

This generous grant will underwrite several planned educational and community events during the anniversary year. In the spring of 2018, a new Financial Social Work (FSW) Certificate Program will be launched, which in addition to financial support from the Woodside Foundation, has received a notable \$23,600 grant from the Calvin K. Kazanjian Economics Foundation, Inc.

"For more than 60 years, the Calvin K. Kazanjian Economics Foundation has provided economics and personal-finance education to various audiences, most particularly to teachers," says Michael MacDowell, the foundation's managing director. "We are now also investing in social service providers. We see social workers as having an immediate impact on improving the financial well-being of their clients. The foundation applauds the work at the University of Maryland's School of Social Work and its innovative new certificate program. We are pleased to be part of this important undertaking." OneMain Financial also contributed \$3,000 toward the certificate program, and it has sponsored other programming offered through UMSSW; OneMain Financial provides support and sponsorship of community financial education programs and activities, in addition to offering financial services to individuals nationwide.

FSWI will offer the certificate program through UMSSW's Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Office. The Certificate Program will run from April to December 2018 and will meet an identified need for greater knowledge and skills in financial capability, stability, and empowerment on the part of social workers who practice in nonprofit and other social service agencies, as well as in schools, medical settings, and justice and court settings. This is especially critical for social workers who work with individuals, families, and communities facing complex financial and psychosocial issues.

FSWI

Financial Social Work Initiative
Advancing Economic Stability

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In large part due to the efforts of the FSWI and its partners over the last 10 years, social workers and human service organizations are seeking additional FSW education and training, in addition to skill-building strategies to enable them to intervene more effectively with financially distressed individuals, families, and communities. Beyond providing resources, social workers must have sophisticated knowledge about issues in typical daily financial life, such as credit, debt, budgeting, financial struggles, and how these intersect with other stressors, and they must be knowledgeable about and familiar with financial issues and barriers, and feel comfortable in addressing such issues directly and effectively with people and communities they serve. Also, social workers who work in FSW must be well-versed in historical and current policy issues that influence and affect people's paths toward greater financial stability, as well as those policies that hinder financial stability or perpetuate economic injustice.

More information about the FSW Certificate Program is available online at www.ssw.umaryland.edu/fsw/education. It will span seven full-day sessions from April to December 2018. The in-person classroom style of the FSW Certificate Program will enable rich class discussion and learning through interaction among the macro and clinical practitioners.

FSWI's 10th anniversary year officially kicked off with the 2017 Daniel Thursz Social Justice Lecture in April, featuring noted economist, author, and commentator Julianne Malveaux, PhD, who provided incisive commentary on the topic of "Economics, Race, and Justice in the 21st Century: Perspective on Our Nation's Future."

In addition to the FSW Certificate Program, the FSWI will host the following:

- The third Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) Convening on Jan. 10-11, 2018, to be held prior to the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) annual conference (Jan. 10-14, 2018, in Washington, D.C.). The third convening is titled "Using Evidence to Influence Policy and Practice" and will feature managers of widely used databases in FCAB work, along with social work researchers who are using these sources to further the FCAB research agenda.
- UMSSW's Homecoming 2018, slated for March 9, 2018, will focus on family financial stability and feature influential advocate Jonathan Mintz, executive director of the New York City-based Cities for Financial Empowerment, who will speak on "Strengthening Family Health: Advancing Economic Stability."
- Increased infusion of FSW and its role within psychosocial assessment in the Practice 1 courses offered in the MSW curricula.
- Development of an FSW alumni network at UMSSW.
- Increased financial support through scholarship opportunities to support MSW students who have an interest in financial social work: The Woodside Foundation Scholarship Endowment in Financial Social Work is available to all MSW students who would like to apply, and The SunTrust Foundation Scholarship Endowment in Financial Social Work is available to incoming first-year students.

"It is hoped that through these events and offerings, and especially with the launch of our FSW Certificate

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Program, the UMSSW FSWI will continue to advance and lead the field as financial stability plays an increasingly important role in social work education, research, and practice,” states FSWI Chair Jodi Frey, PhD, LCSW-C, CEAP.

UMSSW Dean Richard P. Barth, PhD, MSW, lauds the efforts of the Financial Social Work Initiative. “I am thrilled by the rapid development of the FSWI from a kernel of an idea and a few active participants to a wide array of services and educational programs that now appear destined to become central to much of what social work accomplishes.”

For information on these and other FSWI activities, visit www.ssw.umaryland.edu/fsw.

For information on FSW scholarships and how to support UMSSW's FSWI, visit www.ssw.umaryland.edu/fsw/students and www.ssw.umaryland.edu/fsw/support.

For information on the full lineup of FSWI courses each semester in Continuing Professional Education, visit www.ssw.umaryland.edu/cpe.

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