Greetings from the Dean

I am pleased to join with the Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS) to present this 2017 Annual Report.

As we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of SWCOS, I note that SWCOS has maintained critical core programs while adding exciting innovations. The continued vitality of Neighborhood Fellows builds on decades of SWCOS’s service in our communities, and maintains the program’s legacy of teaching advocacy to generations of students who continue to impact neighborhoods across the country after graduation. By bringing Family Connections back into the SWCOS realm, we have further solidified two strong programs. The growth of the Positive Schools Center and the advent of Social Workers in the Library are evidence of working with innovative partners to create programs that are already garnering national attention.

SWCOS has certainly lived up to the high hopes and expectations of its original founders—to break down the walls of the university and open the doors wide for community engagement. SWCOS remains an innovative organization whose approach to benefiting students, public and non-profit organizations, and communities radiates widely.

None of this innovation and growth would be possible without the community partners, alumni, faculty, friends, donors and students noted on these pages. I express my deepest thanks to all of you for sustaining and growing SWCOS, and look forward to the advancements we will achieve together in the years ahead.

With gratitude and warmest regards,

Dean Richard Barth, PhD, MSW
Greetings from the Executive Director

Working for Equity

This school year marks the 25th anniversary of the Social Work Community Outreach Service’s (SWCOS) founding. Over the past 25 years, we have supported hundreds of social work students in learning through field practice in Baltimore communities. Our work spans the entire social work continuum, from macro to clinical, and we have come to understand that wherever we work, issues of social justice continue to emerge as central to our research, practice, and teaching.

This year SWCOS field instructors piloted a curriculum focused on five social justice themes with our students. The themes include: social justice in social work practice; advocacy; implicit bias; mutuality and reciprocity in social work practice; and transactional and transformational service delivery. Throughout the school year, students completed reading assignments and engaged in dialogue with their field instructors about how to apply each social justice theme to their field practice. This has been a wonderful way to connect theories learned in the classroom with real-world social work practice. At the end of the year, during our Presentations of Learning event, students reflect on and describe the tensions between social work values and their experiences working in practice.

The Positive Schools Center, in its third year, is partnered with public schools across Baltimore City to impact school climate through creating transformative leadership; building positive relationships; innovative teaching and learning; creating welcoming environments; and facilitating health and safety in schools. Our coaches, who are experienced educators and facilitators, work with school teams around issues identified by schools, and support each school in growing and evolving its positive school climate.

We were excited to welcome Family Connections back into the SWCOS family where the program originally began. We have been working over the past two years on becoming one organization, with shared values and practices, and we are excited about the additional clinical capabilities Family Connections brings to SWCOS programs. We are now truly working the full social work continuum and living by our belief that macro practice and clinical practice must understand and speak to the impact of structural issues on individual and family functioning.

Our newest program, the Social Worker in the Library, places a field instructor and eight social work students in four Enoch Pratt Library branches. We appreciate the impact of anchor institutions on community well-being, and believe that this model has the potential of, not only supporting individuals and families, but also working with people to collectively plan and implement strategies for improving their own communities. We look forward to expanding this program in the coming years.

We are grateful for the diversity of funders, partners, supporters, staff, alumni, and students who make SWCOS what it is. Thank you for your support during the last 25 years. We are looking forward to the next 25 years, and what that journey will bring.

Sincerely,

Wendy E. Shaia, EdD, MSW
Clinical Assistant Professor & Executive Director
Social Work Community Outreach Service
Family Connections & The Positive Schools Center

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SWCOS Board of Advisors

- Melissa Bresnahan, University of Maryland, Baltimore Office of Philanthropy
- Amy Cohen-Callow, University of Maryland School of Social Work
- Aloysius Essien, University of Maryland, Baltimore Office of Philanthropy
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- Ashley Vails, University of Maryland, Baltimore Community Initiatives and Engagement
- Kendra Watkins, Public Allies
- Michelle Zabel, University of Maryland Institute for Innovation and Implementation

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SWCOS Staff

- Emily Ames-Messenger, Clinical Field Instructor, Family Connections
- LaShonda Godwin, Clinical Field Instructor, Family Connections
- Katie Green, Clinical Field Instructor, Family Connections
- Danielle Harris, Clinical Field Instructor, Family Connections
- Danielle Harris, Community Schools Coordinator
- LaShonda Godwin, Community Schools Coordinator
- Becky Davis, Community Schools Coordinator
- Shantay McKinley, Community Schools Coordinator
- Diane Johnson, Community Schools Coordinator
- LaShonda Godwin, Community Schools Coordinator
- Julia Scott, Program Manager, Next Gen Scholars
- Emily Angerhofer, Clinical Field Instructor, Elev8
- Conlee Phelps Baize, Community Field Instructor, Elev8
- Christopher Beegle, Community Field Instructor, Elev8
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- Michelle Zabel, Community Field Instructor, Elev8
- Colette Eaton, Program Manager, Positive Schools Center
- Emily Angerhofer, Clinical Field Instructor, Family Connections
- Colette Eaton, Clinical Field Instructor, Family Connections
- LaShonda Godwin, Clinical Field Instructor, Family Connections
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New SWCOS Programs

SWCOS and the Baltimore Enoch Pratt Free Library Project

In the Fall of 2017, SWCOS launched a new project in partnership with Baltimore City’s Enoch Pratt Free Libraries. The project’s framework assumes that libraries are well positioned to serve as free, safe, public spaces for community members to acquire resources and seek the support of social workers. Indeed, Baltimore City’s libraries are socially embedded settings that offer high degrees of natural supports for residents. In partnership with library leadership, SWCOS student interns were placed at four libraries where they offered a variety of supports to a diverse group of patrons—immigrant populations who find the library to be a safe “sanctuary,” individuals experiencing homelessness, and others in crisis or seeking guidance. Working with SWCOS and its experienced licensed field instructors and interns is leading to an initial blueprint of how to engage social work professionals in the library system itself.

Program Overviews

Family Connections

Family Connections at Baltimore is a community mental health program, engaging in a variety of service interventions, research activities, and teaching and learning collaboratives, including initiatives that inform policy development related to the negative effects of disinvestment and structural segregation in Baltimore City.

CORE PRINCIPLES

 peny The design of the program emphasizes the need to partner and collaborate with families. This includes meeting them in their homes and community settings with a focus on engagement and re-engagement throughout the work.

 Intervention strategies include individual, family, and group modalities that enhance family cohesion and strengthen relationships with particular focus on the families’ capacities to provide safety and well-being for every member.

FISCAL YEAR 2017 OUTCOME HIGHLIGHTS

Family Engagement and Social Work Education

Fiscal Year 2017 Outcome Highlights

Family Connections

Beginning this academic year, SWCOS students were offered five new training themes related to social justice and critical pedagogy. These themes acknowledge the pedagogical tensions between social work ethics and values within the realities of field practice. Students are often exposed to societal injustice and discrimination based on a range of diverse cultural factors, and these themes, or “modules,” guide an examination of the profession’s response to inequality. Through collaborative relationships, field instructors share feedback and coach student interns in ways that highlight social work practice and interventions as they contribute to the well-being and advancement of social justice for individuals, organizations, and communities.

THE MODULE THEMES INCLUDE:

- Social justice in social work practice
- Implicit bias
- Mutual aid and reciprocity in social work practice
- Transactional and transformational service deliveries
- Advocacy

FISCAL YEAR 2017 OUTCOME HIGHLIGHTS

Neighborhood Partnerships

The Neighborhood Fellows program aims to support at least one capacity enhancement at each agency. Capacities include: organizing business systems, supporting organizational structure, resource development, drafting policies, and developing advocacy campaigns.

100% of the field agencies managers reported that the Neighborhood Fellow strengthened their capacity.

Fiscal Year 2017 Outcome Highlights

Community Involvement

In the last year, 100% of the community activities undertaken at the community center were co-led or co-planned with residents.

By the year’s end, the community center had increased residents seeking and receiving services by 71% from last year’s baseline.

The community center director has worked to gather data to clearly define interest and needs of the residents and families by utilizing data collected from the Spring 2016 needs assessment to guide programing.

Poppleton Resident Services Center

For decades, housing professionals, public health officials, and city leaders have recognized the link between people’s homes and their health and well-being. The Poppleton Resident Services Center works to connect and support residents of the nearby housing community Vintage Gardens and Calloway Row, recognizing the deep value in building community around homes, health, and care.

CORE PRINCIPLES

- The community center offers residential services as dictated by neighborhood needs assessments; these services include financial education, case management, eviction prevention, homework help for students, and computer training to the families of the community.

- The community-based work includes door-to-door, face-to-face support to approximately 300 residents. The community center works to pool resources and expertise to meet shared goals of improving individual and population health.

SWCOS Student Social Justice Modules

Service Learning Projects

Individual letters were written to Baltimore City Council members, district leadership, state delegates and others.

Areas that impact their families’ safety and well-being. In the Spring of 2017, the group culminated in a letter-writing group. Focusing on systemic inequalities, a group of five to seven caregivers met for eight sessions to discuss areas that impact their families’ safety and well-being. In the Spring of 2017, the group culminated in a letter-writing campaign aimed at addressing the capacity of mental health providers to meet the needs of Baltimore’s residents. Individual letters were written to Baltimore City Council members, district leadership, state delegates and others.
Breakthrough Series Collaborative

The Positive Schools Center partners with school districts to identify and collaborate around issues related to school climate and punitive discipline, especially when those issues result in high rates of suspensions and expulsions.

CORE PRINCIPLES

- There are five key pillars of the Center’s school climate: leadership, positive relationships, teaching and learning, environment, and health and safety.
- Through partnering with school leaders, content expert coaches help schools build capacity by providing training, coaching, and professional development.
- School-based coaches support school climate issues as they relate to key climate issues, including trauma-responsive educational practices, restorative and healing approaches, racial justice and equity, social, emotional, and character development, and student, family, and community voice.

FISCAL YEAR 2017 OUTCOME HIGHLIGHTS

Launch School Climate Breakthrough Series Collaborative

- Throughout the year, 8 Baltimore City schools embraced the foundational elements of the Center, grasping restorative content as well as the general methodology of a shared learning collaborative.
- Each school team met together on a regular basis within the school, attended in-person meetings known as “Learning Sessions,” and undertook small tests of change within school climate priorities.

Community Schools Programming

For more than 10 years, SWCOS has been a trusted partner supporting Community School strategies at four Baltimore City Public Schools serving 1,290 students. Each Community School has a Community School Coordinator, a licensed SWCOS social worker, who develops partnerships with community organizations to create an environment where academics, enrichment, health and social supports, family engagement, and youth and community development improve student well-being.

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Integrated Student Supports
- Expanded Learning Time and Opportunities
- Family and Community Engagement
- Collaborative Leadership and Practice

FISCAL YEAR 2017 OUTCOME HIGHLIGHTS

Wolfe Street Academy

- As immigration policies shift across national and state platforms, a series of three town hall meetings were organized for families; each town hall included a combination of information sharing and advocacy efforts held in partnership with CASA. Roughly 100 parents participated in sharing experiences, gaining legal information, and asking questions.
- Throughout the school year, SWCOS facilitated four restorative circle sessions across five grades. A total of roughly 200 students participated in sessions where they were encouraged to process worries and concerns about recent immigration policy changes. This work included professional development support for teachers in order to facilitate similar conversations in their classrooms.
- Number of parents attending parent-teacher conferences increased from 40% to 75% over two years.

Harlem Park Elementary/Middle School

- Harlem Park has partnered with Enoch Pratt Library’s Mobile Job Center, a career readiness effort. A kick-off event was held at the school and 90 residents were able to complete resumes, review credit reports, and receive referrals to job training programs.
- In addition, the school launched its first-ever monthly school newsletter highlighting positive attendance records, community news, summer camp registration information, PTO and School Family Council minutes, and student scholar success stories.

James McHenry Elementary/Middle School

- As a result of participation in the city-wide high school fair and inviting six schools to present to 7th and 8th grade students at James McHenry Elementary/Middle School, 100% of 8th grade students completed an application for their school of choice and six students received acceptance to top city-wide high schools (the highest number in the school's recent history).
Scholarships & Recipients

- Deutsch Foundation Peace Corps Fellowship
  Maria Tolbert
- Betty and Leonard Golombek Scholarship for Social Work Community Outreach Service
  Quasia Peterson
- Sandra D. Hess Scholarship in Community Practice
  Catherine Anthony, Nikki McNeil, Sara Harps, Leanne Pomeroy
- Susan Wolman Fellowship for Work with Children and Families
  Madison Resnick, Julia Fanger
- Paul Ephross Scholarship in Social Work with Groups
  Rennett Bennett-Burden
- Mark Battle Scholarship in Nonprofit Management
  Julie Rivera
- Stanley Wencour Scholarship in Community Organizing
  Vidushani Jayalai

SWCOS Field Placement Agencies

- Wolfe Street Academy
- James McHenry Elementary/Middle School
- Mount Clare Overlook Apartments
- Southeast Community Development Corporation at Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School and Ruhrah Elementary/Middle School
- Vintage Gardens and Calloway Row in Poppleton
- United Way Family Stability Initiative at Ben Franklin High School and Dundalk Middle School
- Elev8 Baltimore at William Pinderhughes; Arundel; Cherry Hill and Collington Square
- Calloway Row in Poppleton
- United Workers
- City Neighbors Highschool
- Patterson Park Public Charter School
- University of Maryland Pediatric Dental Clinic
- The Ingenuity Project at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute; Hamilton Elementary/Middle School
- Southwest Partnership
- Hope Health Systems
- In, For, Of Inc. in Reservoir Hill
- Strong City Baltimore