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The Advocate is published quarterly. Deadlines: JANUARY 15 for SPRING Issue (March publication), APRIL 15 for SUMMER (June), JULY 15 for FALL (September), OCTOBER 15 for WINTER (December).

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From our desk to yours

by Leslie MacKinnon, BSW, RSW
ACSW Membership & Advocacy Coordinator

What would you like to see on these pages?

The Advocate is undergoing an exciting transition with new members joining the editorial board. We want to know what topics you think will most challenge, inspire, and interest our 6000-plus membership. Please contact Leslie MacKinnon [lesliem@acsw.ab.ca] with your suggestions on the magazine’s format, ideas for regular columns, or suggestions for future themes.

Save the Date!

2013 ACSW Conference
Shaping Our World: Where Social Work and Technology Meet
March 20 - 22, 2013

The conference planning committee is pleased to announce the theme for next year’s annual conference: Shaping Our World: Where Social Work and Technology Meet.

The featured keynote speaker, Dr. Frederic G. Reamer, served as chair of the American national task force that wrote the current Code of Ethics adopted by the National Association of Social Workers. He has lectured extensively, both nationally and internationally on professional ethics, malpractice, and liability. His research is now moving into the area of technology.

The conference will be held at the Calgary Telus Convention Centre Wednesday, March 20 to Friday, March 22, 2013.

You can find a call for proposals on the ACSW website. The deadline for submissions is September 28, 2012.

Our apologies

In our Summer issue, we had mistakes in two photo captions.

Kristjanna Grimmelt, BA, MFA, winner of the Honorary Membership Award, was not present at the 2012 Conference. The award was accepted on Kristjanna’s behalf by her mother, Alix McLauchlan, who we mistakenly identified as Kristjanna in our article “Presenting our award winners.”

Our second caption error was under the photo below, which is the University of Calgary (not Alberta!) display at the Conference.

Please accept our sincere apologies for any inconvenience these errors may have caused.

The University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work, one of our conference sponsors
Congratulations!

Verna Wittigo, BSW, RSW, received the Institute of the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, Esquao Award, honoring “angels among us” in the Clara Woodbridge Community Involvement category.

The Esquao Awards Ceremony is renowned as the only one in Canada that specifically celebrates the achievements of Aboriginal women.

Wittigo contributes to the wellbeing of her community by generously volunteering and inspiring others to do the same. She has served as a victim service advocate for more than twelve years, and has been active in the Network Against Violence Society and Sucker Creek Women’s Emergency Shelter. She enthusiastically supports the social work profession and others in the field while building a deeper understanding and appreciation for her culture and the spiritual and sacred role of women.

Area coordinator news

The Calgary area coordinators met for their annual planning meeting in June and will be co-hosting an ethics workshop with the University of Calgary on November 5.

Dr. Kerry Bowman, a Canadian bioethicist and conservationist will present. Born in Montreal and now based in Toronto, Bowman is a frequent national and international public speaker best known for his wide-ranging work in the areas of bioethics and environmental protection.

Registration is now open:
ucalgary.ca/pd/Ethics_in_Social_Work_Practice

Alberta social worker wins International Business Award

Edmonton area bestselling author, transformational speaker, and ACSW member Charmaine Hammond was awarded the prestigious 2012 International Business Matchmaker of the Year award at the eWomenNetwork Convention in Dallas. The award recognizes a unique woman who has consistently gone out of her way to help others succeed.

Hammond promotes these 4-C tips for business matchmaking:
1. Connect
2. Communicate
3. Champion
4. Create an experience

Hammond is co-author of a book scheduled for release this September, GPS Your Best Life: Charting Your Destination and Getting There in Style.

Impact Motion Pictures is developing Hammond’s award-winning book, On Toby’s Terms, into a movie.

Her other publishing credits include Toby The Pet Therapy Dog and His Hospital Friends and Bounce Forward. Her books are available in bookstores and online.

Please visit hammondgroup.biz for more information.
University of Calgary MSW practicum student at ACSW

In the Edmonton MSW program, Linda Rae Crockett is completing her field practicum at the ACSW office.

Linda will be offering workshops and developing a resource kit on her area of interest—social workers experiencing workplace bullying and lateral violence.

She invites your input on this subject and invites you to email her at mswstudentcrockett@gmail.com or contact her through the ACSW office.

When complete, the resource kit will be accessible from the ACSW website.

Welcome our new additions!

Lochlan Lawrence Donnelly

One June 30, ACSW’s Regulatory Secretary, Desiree Hurst, gave birth to Lochlan Lawrence Donnelly, 7 pounds, 9 ounces.

Stella Grace King

Stella Grace King has arrived! Sporting golden locks, she weighed in at 6 pounds, 13 ounces, and was born at 4:43 PM on June 14. Parents Sean and Mona are doing well and Grandma Lynn couldn’t be more thrilled.

ACSW is now on Facebook and Twitter!

Like the Alberta College of Social Workers Facebook page:
facebook.com/AlbertaCollegeofSocialWorkers

Follow Lori Sigurdson, Professional Affairs Coordinator, on Twitter:
twitter.com/LoriSigurdson1

The Calgary Social Workers for Social Justice have a Facebook page as well:
facebook.com/CalgarySocialWorkersForSocialJustice
President’s report

I hope you all had time to enjoy the summer weather and take a well-deserved break from the challenging work you are engaged in.

In June, Council met for its annual planning retreat in Calgary. We spent three days reviewing and refining our strategic plan and considering how to better engage ACSW members. The first evening saw us focus on social work education and invite input from social work educators in Alberta. We heard from the colleges and universities about their plans and came away with valuable information to apply to our planning. Our goal is to continue this dialogue with educators in future meetings.

Another part of this retreat aimed to address the resolution passed at the last annual general meeting, in which the membership asked council to contact the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) and begin a dialogue with them about how ACSW might renew its association with them.

Council collaborated on crafting a letter to open this discussion with the CASW president, Morel Cassie. That letter received a positive response on July 31, 2012. We will keep you informed as the discussion progresses.

Work to update our Social Policy Framework has continued over the summer. In conjunction with this task, many of you have participated in the development of the provincial Social Policy Framework initiated by Minister Hancock and the staff of the Human Services Ministry. Thanks to all of you who took the time to give input into this process.

Bob Johnson is the president of ACSW Council. You can contact him through the ACSW office at acsw@acsw.ab.ca.

In Memoriam

Walter Coombs
1932 - 2012

Walter Coombs, a lifelong member of the ACSW (his membership was #8) passed away March 3, 2012. In more recent times Coombs and his wife were known for raising llamas and Spanish meat goats and volunteering in the Onoway area. Originally trained as a psychiatric nurse, colleagues knew Coombs for his community work and as executive director of the Canadian Mental Health Association in Alberta.

Later, upon entering social work, Coombs was an active participant in professional social work affairs for half a century. In 1967, he became the fourth president of the Alberta Association of Social Work and served several terms as council member and often as a committee member. Coombs was always ready to provide hands-on assistance. For example, in 1976 he helped restart the Advocate by providing writing, editing, and lay-out for each issue. A strong supporter of the Canadian Association of Social Workers, Coombs was a leader who ran for political office at municipal and provincial levels. He will be remembered for his intellect, sense of humor, compassion, and collegiality.

Many thanks to Baldwin Reichwein for this tribute.
Professional membership—why belong?

At this stage in life, my children are building paths in their adult lives. I love hearing about their hopes and interests. Of course becoming a grandmother has heightened my appreciation even more! It occurs to me that the next generation is becoming increasingly aware of what is important to them as they build their homes and make decisions about their professional lives. I’m delighted to share this newness through their eyes. Alongside, I am grateful to observe with clarity, an endeavour for life—the continually growing alignment of my own values with my profession. I also appreciate how clearly our profession’s mandated objectives define our collective directive.

As the regulatory body for the profession of social work in Alberta, the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW) is guided by regulatory obligations legislated under the Health Professions Act (HPA). Mandated ACSW objectives are to serve and protect the public interest; provide direction and regulate the profession; establish, maintain and enforce standards for registration, continuing competence, and standards of practice; establish, maintain, and enforce a code of ethics and approve educational programs for registration purposes. ACSW also supports membership activities that promote skilled and ethical social work practice.

Whether you maintain membership as a social work student, recent graduate, or experienced social worker, these objectives, values, and development opportunities are key features of your professional body. Of the list in “Why belong? Benefits of membership,” consider which are most important to you and which align best with your own values. May your list be continually enhanced on your professional path!

WHY BELONG?
BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- collective ability to promote member excellence in practice
- enhance credibility of the social work profession
- accountability to your clients and practice to ensure public protection and well being
- employer confidence in standards of training and skills of the profession
- guidelines for practice through the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
- resources to support and connect you: the Advocate, ACSW website, e-newsletter, continuing competence workshops, social and networking events, annual conference
- ability to contribute and further areas of professional interest through member interest groups
- opportunity to advocate and promote social justice
- support for your personal commitment to practicing with excellence
Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development—Stockholm 2012

A strong contingent of Albertans traveled to Stockholm to attend this year’s International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work/International Council on Social Welfare conference*. Two ACSW council members (Anne-Marie McLaughlin and Richard Gregory), myself, and about 20 other Alberta RSWs joined about 2500 other participants, representing more than 100 countries.

The many conference highlights included keynote presentations by internationally renowned speakers such as Vishanthie Sewpaul on human rights in Africa, Tom Shakespeare on the rights of people with disabilities, Michael Marmot on social and environmental determinants of health, Cindy Blackstock (Canadian) on First Nations and the responsibility of environment, and Rabeb Othmani on social media and the Arab Spring.

The focus of the conference was moving forward on The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development, which was launched in Hong Kong in 2010. The commitment as presented in the conference program reads as follows:

As social workers, educators and social development practitioners, we witness the daily realities of personal, social and community challenges. We believe that now is our time to work together, at all levels, for change, for social justice, and for the universal implementation of human rights, building on the wealth of social initiatives and social movements.

We, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), recognize that the past and present political, economic, cultural and social orders, shaped in specific contexts, have unequal consequences for global, national, and local communities and have negative impacts on people. Specifically, we recognize that:

- the full range of human rights are available to only a minority of the world’s population
- unjust and poorly regulated economic systems, driven by unaccountable market forces, together with noncompliance

* ACSW was not responsible for the costs associated with participation in this conference.
with international standards for labour conditions and a lack of corporate social responsibility, have damaged the health and wellbeing of peoples and communities, causing poverty and growing inequality

- cultural diversity and the right to self-expression facilitate a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence, but these rights are in danger due to aspects of globalization which standardize and marginalize peoples, with especially damaging consequences for indigenous and first nation peoples

- people live in communities and thrive in the context of supportive relationships, which are being eroded by dominant economic, political, and social forces

people’s health and wellbeing suffer as a result of inequalities and unsustainable environments related to climate change, pollutants, war, natural disasters, and violence to which there are inadequate international responses.

Consequently, we feel compelled to advocate for a new world order which makes a reality of respect for human rights and dignity and a different structure of human relationships.

As both the Alberta College of Social Workers and the Alberta government have made social policy frameworks a priority in the past two years, The Global Agenda provides a timely reminder that people everywhere are affected by social structures and that most of us in Alberta are significantly better off than many others around the globe. As social workers we all need to participate in efforts to create social change.

Alison MacDonald is the Associate Registrar and Complaints Director for ACSW. She can be reached at acswreg@acsw.ab.ca.
Letter to the Editor

Mobbing in the workplace

by Linda Rae Crockett, BSW, RSW, MSW Practicum Student

This letter is in response to Alison MacDonald’s column from the Fall 2011 Advocate, “Workplace Bullying or Troubled Supervision?” My story is about workplace mobbing, which occurs when two or more people exhibit negative (overt and/or covert) behaviours toward a colleague. Even though my experience happened around 10 years ago, I still feel its effects.

I accepted a new position in a smaller office outside my city. The unit had five seasoned social workers who had established a clique after working together for many years. This initially made it difficult to form supportive relationships in my unit. My role was unique from the others, which added to my sense of isolation and difficulty establishing connections. Eventually I did connect with two people, which motivated the other three to be just a little more friendly. In time they were more consistent about inviting me for coffee and lunches.

After a few months I began to relax and enjoy my new place of work. They seemed like very nice people. But something changed overnight. One morning I noticed an unusual silence and many closed office doors. In the hallway, some of my colleagues ignored me and avoided eye contact when passing by. The group went for coffee and disregarded me as they walked by my desk.

I approached the person I felt closest to, but she clenched her hands together, placed them on her desk, tightened her lips and stared straight ahead. Her face was blank. Regardless of how many times I asked what was wrong, she did not say a word.

This experience devastated and tormented me. It is hard to recover when you have no idea how such a situation could have occurred and are given no opportunity to defend yourself. I still wonder how five mature, experienced, and skilled social workers could behave in such an unprofessional manner. Even had I been guilty of the accusation, these behaviours were abusive and should have been addressed by my supervisor.

Seeking resolution, I shared what was happening with my supervisor. Due to the many other issues she needed to address, my problem was not taken forward. I soon learned this group also assumed I was the supervisor’s pet. I was ostracized for several months before transferring out of this office.

Today I am aware I can contact the Alberta College of Social Workers and file a complaint against another registered social worker. I am happy to say that I can also help my co-workers if they are ever in this situation. Our code of ethics applies to working with our colleagues. Maybe that is forgotten now and then.

Thank you for raising this discussion. Many endure mobbing and other forms of bullying in silence. The subject needs to be shared so that changes can be made to ensure those who suffer can start to feel safe and respected in their workplace.

In the U of C Edmonton MSW program, Linda Rae Crockett is completing her field practicum at the ACSW office.
Blue Quills First Nations College

By Sharon Steinhauer, credentials

The history of colonization and residential schools is central to the academic and training programs at Blue Quills First Nations College. These programs, designed to restore and support family and community health, are key to the Diploma of Social Work curriculum. Engagement between the college and community can share how this history causes unresolved intergenerational trauma and disproportionate representation of Indigenous peoples on all social indicators, including underemployment and high incarceration, school drop-out, and children in government care rates.

Blue Quills College is located in a former residential school. The majority of students are residential school survivors or descendants from the surrounding seven First Nations communities that own and operate the college. The ability to address personal and family histories are critical elements of the transformative educational journey here. Students of all cultures can achieve healing outcomes along with their academic credentials. Reframing experiences into community and First Nation stories frees individuals from the burden of internalized oppression and mobilizes new insights and resources for personal, family, and community change. Emerging science on the brain and trauma response informs a relational approach, blending Indigenous wisdom with western science.

As active leaders in addressing the residential school legacy, Blue Quills staff are skilled in facilitating circle dialogue to support safe expression. The Blue Quills vision—along with addressing the educational and healing needs of critical elements and their communities—is to restore respectful relationships between Indigenous peoples and the rest of Canada. Within the college and in Cree terminology, social work students are deemed to be “good relationship builders.” It is expected that most will carry this responsibility into their professional practices after graduation.

A “conversation among allies”

Two-day symposiums conceptualized as a “conversation among allies” have become a primary means to engage large and diverse groups of people impacted by residential school history.

Symposiums are organized around the four phases of recovery as articulated by Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart over her years of work in addressing historic or intergenerational trauma. A Lakota psychologist, Dr. Brave Heart is a traditional helper who contributes significantly to literature on these topics.

The four stages are framed over the two days as:

1. confronting historical trauma and knowing our (shared) history;
2. understanding the trauma;
3. releasing the pain and sharing stories of change; and
4. transcending the trauma (what do “we” look like, feel like, be like when we are no longer defined in terms of the trauma).

The latter phase is explored by participants as priorities for action or next steps.

Sharon Steinhauer, MSW, RSW, is Program Coordinator, Diploma of Social Work, at Blue Quills First Nations College.
Diploma Dialogue

Continued from page 11

The symposiums contribute to a shared understanding of the residential school history, which is reframed from an Indigenous to a Canadian issue—one in which all can contribute, whether as survivors, descendants, former employees, or non-Indigenous people with little or no knowledge of this troubled heritage.

Conversations are structured as safe venues to allow for the expression of emotion and memory, as well as to help non-Indigenous folks understand and address the burden of guilt and responsibility many experience upon hearing residential school students’ experiences. This creates a shared understanding of the legacy of historical and intergenerational trauma among all participants and leads to greater understanding of wounds, often expressed in addictions and family violence.

Additionally, local stakeholder groups are formed to help plan and deliver each event. Within their geographic areas, participants are introduced to resources and services that can support partnerships, healing work, and a Canadian response to this shared history. They are encouraged to link to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (trc.ca) and to local or regional initiatives where possible.

About 600 people have attended three events, two at Blue Quills College and one at the University of Alberta this past March. A fourth symposium is planned for Calgary in October 2012.

The agenda combines a ceremony, student panel, and role play with experiential activities, survivor stories, power point presentations, videos, and circle dialogues. A showcase of local

Attendees at the two-day symposium at Blue Quills

"...the emphasis on learning versus blame helped me feel comfortable with this issue for the first time..."
community programs and initiatives relating to the theme are
hosted, with survivor-led tours of the college offered when the
symposium is held at the St. Paul campus.

These forums provide a key tool for restoring respectful
relationships and ensuring participants experience hope for the
future. Evaluations have been very positive for these events.
Participants have said “the emphasis on learning versus blame
helped me feel comfortable with this issue for the first time”
and “this fills up my cup, gives me hope, so that I can go back
into my community, family and work with more motivation
for change.”

Community resources in production
A professional videographer attended two symposium events,
secured permission from all participants, and had individual
and circle interviews with selected individuals. The video will
describe the scope and depth of the healing work required
to resolve this Canadian history. A facilitator guide is being
developed to help individuals host local conversations or
workshops using the symposium and four phases of recovery.

A key learning from the symposium experience is that we
collectively need to develop more cultural competency and
demonstrate true understanding, appreciation, and respect for
different world views, protocols, and cultural traditions. As a
province and a country, we can mindfully engage and embrace
reflective opportunities to restore respectful relationships
among all cultures.

Next steps
Participants offered a wide range of personal to organizational
action options. The basic messages are that symposiums should
“go on the road” and that all Canadians need to know about
this history.

We end our Symposia with the poem Reconciliation, which
speaks to this collective journey.

Reconciliation
by Rebecca Tabobodung

We are waking up to our history
from a forced slumber
We are breathing it into our lungs
so it will be part of us again
it will make us angry at first
because we will see how much you stole from us
and for how long you watched us suffer
we will see how you see us
and how when we copied your ways
it killed our own

We will cry and cry and cry
because we can never be the same again
But we will go home to cry
and we will see ourselves in this huge mess
and we will gently whisper the circle back
and it will be old and it will be new

Then we will breathe our history back to you
you will feel how strong and alive it is
and you will feel yourself become a part of it
And it will shock you at first
because it is too big to see all at once
and you won’t want to believe it
you will see how you see us
and all the disaster in your ways
how much we lost

And you will cry and cry and cry
because we can never be the same again
But we will cry with you
and we will see ourselves in this huge mess
and we will gently whisper the circle back
and it will be old and it will be new

Rebecca Tabobodung, a member of the Wasauksing First Nation (Parry Island,
Ontario), is a poet, activist, and filmmaker. She lives in Toronto.

A Healing Journey for Us All: Uncovering the Wounds of Empire (Toronto: The United
Spotlight on social workers in private practice in Alberta

Meet Laurie Fisher, Grande Prairie

Laurie Fisher, MSW, RSW, has worked in private practice for 19 of the 22 years she’s lived in Grande Prairie. She employs a primarily cognitive-behavioral therapy model and has specialized training in trauma. Fisher’s clients travel from within a large area—High Level and Peace River to Grande Cache and northeastern B.C. to Fox Creek.

Can you speak about your path to private practice work?

I’ve been in private practice since 1993, after my position as Director of Social Work at Grande Prairie’s hospital became a casualty to health care cuts. From the time I worked in in-patient psychiatry at Foothills Hospital in the late eighties (pre-BSW/MSW), I knew I wanted to do clinical work and be in private practice. I started with self-organized workshops and groups on women’s wellness, then moved to individual and couple therapy.

Like most private practitioners, I started with the Employee Assistance Program. Ten years ago I took on a contract with First Nations & Inuit Health as the mental health therapist at Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation.

What do you see as the benefits and challenges of practicing social work in an oil and gas town? Do you provide services to outlying rural areas?

The oil and gas industry has contributed to Grande Prairie doubling in size since I moved here and that growth is reflected in all therapy practices here. Substantially more therapists of all disciplines are in practice now than when I started and all are busy. There’s a lot of money here, which makes it relatively easy for a private practitioner to do well. The double-edged sword is the demands and culture of the oil patch are such that there is a lot of stress on individuals and relationships. I don’t go to outlying rural areas other than Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation.

What are your areas of specialty? Which client populations do you serve? How many clients do you typically see per week?

It’s only in the past several years I could identify an area of specialty. My focus as a generalist therapist is on individual adults and couples, addressing issues including depression, anxiety, self-esteem, and stress management. Within the past 10 years, I’ve become increasingly interested in trauma treatment and have invested a great deal of energy improving my skills in that area. I received my Level 2 Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) training in 2007 and have been involved in training focused on sensorimotor psychotherapy, attachment disorders, affect dysregulation, and the neurobiological aspects of trauma and treatments informed by that.

I try to keep myself at a maximum of 12 private clients a week with two full days each week at Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation.

How do you incorporate social work values into your work?

Relationship is one of the areas social work excels in and I ensure this is a primary component. I see my clients within the context of their environment and strongly believe in focusing on their strengths rather than pathologizing and diagnosing. I believe clients are experts about their own situations and that I am a consultant to assist with addressing the issues they identify. Finally, as a private practitioner, I am also aware not everyone is able to pay my fee, at least for long-term therapy, so I do my best to use short-term models whenever possible and do a certain amount of pro bono work.
What are some challenges you have faced in private practice and how have you managed them?

Some of the challenges I have faced include issues with third party billing as a social worker rather than a psychologist, fee parity with psychologists, and the lack of public awareness of what a clinical social worker does. I’ve participated with the Private Practice Committee on trying to address these areas.

On a more personal level, my biggest issue has been to ask for a fee that accurately reflects my ability. I’ve dealt with that by taking a deep breath and practicing my asking for money skills and by taking lessons from some psychologists I know who don’t seem to share this issue.

How do you deal with the common experiences of social workers in private practice, such as isolation or lack of support?

Until a couple years ago, I had a small office by myself. I now share an office with another clinical social worker and we make an effort to get together on a regular basis for peer supervision. Before that, I worked at connecting with whomever I could find whose methods of practice were in some way consistent with my own.

How has being part of the ACSW Private Practice Registry or Clinical Registry benefited you? Would you recommend other social workers in private practice join?

The Private Practice Registry has given me an awareness of and connection to other social workers in private practice which I’ve found very helpful in addressing some of the isolation. I’ve also met amazing social workers through that registry. Participating on the Private Practice Committee has given me the opportunity to work with other practitioners to address some of the issues we all face.

The Clinical Registry has most certainly improved my opportunities for practice and credibility as a clinician. Both ensure I don’t lose sight of my need to pay attention to ongoing professional development. It’s easy to become complacent, especially when you’re on your own. I definitely recommend membership in both of these registries.

Do you see a need for more social workers in private practice to support each other and collaborate through venues such as the ACSW Private Practice Committee?

I think many private practicing social workers don’t know what they’re missing by not being part of the collaboration and support available through the roster and committee. The more involvement with these groups, the more weight we carry toward making change and becoming a strong, unified voice. I believe the public has a very narrow view of what social work includes and the more of us out there practicing privately in our chosen areas, the more social work is promoted as a multi-faceted profession.

—

If you are a social worker in private practice in Alberta please join us for the Annual Private Practice Meeting. You will enjoy lunch, opportunities for informal networking, discussion of private practice hopes and concerns, and a guest speaker.

Date: Saturday, September 29th, 2012
Time: 10am - 4pm
Location: Room 2R06, Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre, 11111 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, AB

Please RSVP or direct questions to Jennifer Mansell (therapy@jennifermansell.com) or Laurie Fisher (ljfisher@telusplanet.net).
U of C updates
By Eldon Duchscher, BComm

U of C Southern Alberta Campus
Master of Social Work students

The University of Calgary Southern Alberta Campus is recruiting a new class of master of social work (MSW) students for the 2013 semester. Based in Lethbridge, the program is designed to provide an opportunity for working professionals to pursue their graduate education while maintaining employment through most or all of the program.

The program is at the midway point of its second cohort and is now forming its third. “I know our second group will also distinguish themselves as advanced clinical practitioners, supervisors, and leaders,” says Dr. Peter Gabor, head of the Southern Alberta Region. “We invite social workers considering an MSW program to contact us to discuss whether this program is for them.”

Student benefits
Carole Reimer decided to enter the program after working more than 15 years as a social work supervisor. She had originally graduated from the Southern Alberta Region campus in 1998. “The program fit my life and work schedule perfectly,” says Reimer. “I would not have been able to take a year or two away from my family and work.”

Reimer says she will always remember walking to the back of the platform, receiving her degree, and being congratulated by the faculty. In her words “being part of this group allowed me to reconnect and make stronger connections with social workers I had previously known.” Now working as a site supervisor for Alberta Health Services, Reimer has been assigned additional provincial level projects as a direct result of her MSW studies.

Hired into one of her practicum placements, Melissa Wilde worked at St. Michael’s Health Centre throughout the completion of her MSW. She had formerly graduated from the University of Calgary Southern Campus in 2005. Wilde says “the program allowed me the flexibility to learn about evidence based practice with the client population I was most interested in serving. I was able to gain the skills and confidence to move my career forward and to better serve my clients.” Wilde now works at the Jack Ady Cancer Centre in Lethbridge as a social worker and says she plans to “continue to engage in lifelong learning, keeping current with evidence based practice.”

If future classes are like past graduates, they will have wide-ranging backgrounds but a common goal—to gain knowledge and skills to take back to their community. Please visit ucalgary.ca/fsouth for more information on the master of social work program at the Southern Alberta Region.

Eldon Duchscher is the Director of Communications for the University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work.
New RSWs
Membership as of
July 31, 2012: 6,557

Miriam Anne Abel
Stephanie Omame Agyapong
Abhirami Ajithbhavanam
Padmanabhan
Nellie Alcaraz
Manju Ann Antony
Bidwell Nenene Anuebunwa
Samantha L. Archibald
Haben Mekonen Bahta
Carly Patricia Bailey
Samantha Mary Bailey
Jismat Bandali
Jenna Rae Baziuk
Chelsey Michelle Berkenpas
Allie Lynn Blackburn
Christine Charmaine Boyd
Erin Jessica Bronskill
Telisa Latasha Bucknor
Danielle Clara Budgell
Amber Dawn Button
Charlotte Ann Byskal
Nicole Audrey Catagas
Queenie Noelianie Celestino
Michelle Lynn Chefurka
Carolyn Sue Clark
Stephanie Ann Clowe
Richelle Alyssa Rosaline Collins
Kristen Renee Corbett
Laura Cuell
Natasha Lynn Curry
Lisa Catherine Darrah
Leslie Dolan
Paige Alexandra Doyle
Wenda Leigh Dunn
Tobias Matthew Dunne
Lisa Gaye Eastwood
Rolanda Cara Earich
Melissa Mae Eng Dahl
Lynne M Engelman
Lindsay Amanda Evans
Jude Chukwuemeka Ezeh
Melissa Jean Faucher
Barrett Robert Ferguson
Liz Heather Ferguson
Benjamin Charles Fong
Megan Laurel Forbis
Marion Louise Foster
Veronique Carmen Gagne-Lemire
Aziza Giga
Lynda Rose Gladue
Carina Goehing
Kathleen Marie Gorman
Samneet Kaur Grewal
Christian Andres Guinez
Kayla Anne Gurski
Deborah Louise Haines
Kathryn Wenonah Hartford
Chelsey Elizabeth Healy
Amanda Lynne Heier
Michael Bryan Heninger
Patrick Carl Higgins
Jerra Leone Hjelte
Jordanna Lee-Anne Huggins
Marcela Paz Hunter
Lacey Verna-Mae
Ivanchenko
Alizah Jessa
Shireen Jhetam
Therese Anne Jodoin
Trista Angie Johnston
Paulet G Jones-Dyche
Heather Jose-Bragg
Edita Kazic
Frank Kelton
Minota-Jean Kennell
Samantha Corrine Kerr
Erin Mae Adele Keyzer
Thomas James Knox
Charlene Deborah Kocken
Elena Ana Kuncic
Rudolph Kutama
Kathleen Dianne Kutzer
Crystal Yee Git Kwan
Marisa Starr Lalone
Monique Nicole Lapierre
Claire Louise Large
Alexandra Elizabeth Lieberman
Judy Lund
Morgan Alexis MacKinnon
Natasha Freda Marshall
Nicole Marie Marshall
Jessica Nohemi Martinez Perez
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Amy Elizabeth McDonald
Sarah Christine McDonald
Colleen Marie McGonigal
Shannon Roberta McIntosh
Tanya Lea McKay
Raina Susanne Messinger
Bobbi Lee Michaud
Amber Kaitlin Miller
Nicholas Molesky
Helen Clare Moran
Jessica Danielle Morningchild
James Fraser Murray
Siphwile Mutindo
Grace Rehema Mwemera
Reena Nariani
Jennifer Michelle Ney
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Isi Adesuwa Osazuwa
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Nicole Ashley Parisian
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Amy Judy Parsons
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Candice Leigh Petrone
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Colleen Martha Pidzarko
Barbara Alkja Pietrzykowski
Brenna Richelle Marie Poetker
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Sherry Katrina Joan Pongracz
Jenna Lisa Pothier
Sheila Ramona Raffray
Luke Mitchell Ray Risto
Courtney Michelle Robertson
Chelsey Ann Rosher
Courtney Saxbee
Tracy Lee Schaible
Smita Sebastian
Omolola Abiodun Segun-Ige
Bianca Serfontein
Christopher Vincent Jay Severight
Jagat Singh Sheoran
Elizabeth Jane Smith
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Kailyn Siobhan Smith
Ashlin Karen Sogge
Ashley Amara Spinney
Amie Whitney Staniloff
Jordan Grant Stellingwerff
Emily Dawn Stevenson
Carol Lynn Syrett
Melchor Wilberto Talan
Manuela Taylor
Pamela Francine Taylor
Miriam Grace Angeles Tiu
Stacey Lee Toma
Allison van Schie
Lei Wan
Steven Bruce Ward
Andrea Marie Weeke
Lisa Hope Wells
Da Wen
Monica Louise Wiebe
Brittney Rae Willetts
Dana Ann Wilson
Megan May Wilson
Tracy Elizabeth Zala
Fan Zhang
Leena Zybin
Follow the Money: Where is Alberta’s Wealth Going? by Kevin Taft, with Mel McMillan and Junaid Jahangir (2012). Detselig Enterprises Limited, Calgary. 133 pages

Former Alberta Liberal leader Kevin Taft might bill his latest book as a quantitative research effort. He attempts to explain why the provincial government has been a chronic miser in public service spending notwithstanding what he calls our “super-sized, tiger economy.”

Collaborating with two University of Alberta economics academics—Mel McMillan and Junaid Jahangir—Taft correlates and plots figures from Statistics Canada databases and sources known for their technical vigor, such as the Canadian Institute of Health Information. Cleanly demonstrative graphs, treated with adjustment for inflation and other relevant factors, juxtapose variables augmented with inferential narratives that connect the storyline of the book’s core discoveries:

- by any standards, the Alberta economy is huge because of its oil and gas industry
- corporations and residents pay extraordinarily little tax here
- as a consequence to receiving low royalties for oil and gas resource exploitation, the Alberta government saves much less than it could and should
- the government’s constant warning of a fiscal crisis due to public sector over-spending is a false alarm, as statistical analyses do not bear out this claim
- the real problem is a chronic deficit that arises from the ever-mounting pressure of changing societal needs, as well as being heavily dependent on a singular industrial base that has profound personal, familial, and community implications.

Taft’s Shredding the Public Interest (1997), Clear Answers (2000), and Democracy Derailed (2007) type-cast his compelling partisan perspective and convincing analytical style. These qualities play a large part in bringing his points home—to the cheer of any Albertan readers harboring politically-suppressed selves. By this measure, his new book is strangely restrained when it comes to engaging in close-contact sparring with the progressive conservative government.

Taft poses an interesting conundrum that drives his investigative pursuit. “If the Alberta government is rich, why doesn’t it feel rich?” The question suggests an uncharacteristic viewpoint that public spending restraints and cut-backs are results of an emotional affliction worthy of empathic understanding. Since leaving electoral politics, perhaps his deflating partisan sentiment is exceedingly forgiving. Are we being treated to a psycho-social assessment of the affective knots troubling the progressive conservative government? That would be too much to expect from Taft. Indeed, the mysterious feeling is to be explained, instead, with hard statistical data and inferences.

Reviewed by Eugene Ip, DPhil, RSW
"If the Alberta government is rich, why doesn’t it feel rich?"

What follows these findings is anomalous for what is supposed to be politics-inspired writing. Taft’s conclusive critique in sections such as What happened to the public interest? and Feeling betrayed essentially reiterates this message: the Alberta government has fallen way behind on public service spending, stopping short of explicating from some obvious angles, its role as “the trustee of the people’s wealth…” and its flunked performance “…for failing its citizens, and the future.”

It is significant that Taft passes over partisan conservative ideology when answering the subtitle’s question. The effort would have put public sector spending back where it rightfully belongs in electoral politics. He could have explored how his findings demonstrate the empowerment of private interests. To this end, some relevant exploratory questions would then be: has the government always seen its primary role as a responsibility to create the largest possible potential for satisfying private motives? Should the private sector deliver public services as much as possible? What if being a public service spending miser simply follows the script of a political worldview?

Taft’s attempt to avoid “ideology and spin” ironically prevented him from going the necessary distance to deconstruct a subject made of the exact elements he wanted to disassociate from.

Eugene Ip is the Chair of Community Studies at NorQuest College, Edmonton, Alberta, and a member of the Advocate Editorial Board.

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Online confidentiality

By Ilona Cardinal, BA, BFA, Promotions Coordinator, ACSW

Is online confidentiality achievable? How can social workers continue to respect their client’s rights to privacy when using social media programs like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace and Reddit? Begin by recognizing that everything posted online via social media programs is public information.

Facebook often changes the way its privacy settings work, making it from difficult to impossible to ensure your posts and other information are totally confidential. Even when your privacy settings seem secure “liking” a comment on a public profile or page is a public action that can lead to your personal profile. “Friending” clients and communicating with them on social networks can expose you and your client to non-confidentiality.

Fielding questions outside your employment location and office hours may affect the trust and confidence required to maintain your professional relationship with a client. While email communication is more discrete, be aware of the complications that could arise if your messages are forwarded or carbon copies (cc) and blind carbon copies (:bcc) are used indiscriminately.

Maintaining online confidentiality requires you to keep very current with changing technology. For more information, refer to the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) Code of Ethics Value 5: Confidentiality in Professional Practice at: tinyurl.com/83uck3l. The ACSW Standards of Practice also addresses some of these issues in the Competence section, under “Technology in social work practice”: tinyurl.com/7vu4xst
The first thing my counseling clients learn about me is that animals have an important place in my life. The photos on my office wall, cat hair on a chair, or the horse pendant around my neck make it hard to miss! Because many people keep animals, have owned them in the past, or simply enjoy them, the topic is a therapeutic, gentle way to engage with my clients, who range in age from 4 – 84.

Sharing stories about animal antics and the frustrations, grief, joy, and companionship they bring facilitates two cornerstones of a therapeutic relationship—the need to build rapport and foster openness. I am able to connect with clients on a level of sameness aided by my own relationship with the animal, which helps instill belief in my compassion, caregiving, and trustworthiness. “If her animal is cared for and loves her, she can’t be that bad!”

Animal-based conversations provide a graceful way into healing discussions about childhood experiences, relationships, beliefs, behaviors, coping strategies, and personal challenges. A comment like “my dog and I would hide under the bed when my parents argued” opens into themes of safety and fear. “Scruffy ran away” may allow for an exploration of grief, loss, abandonment, and handling disappointment. This dialogue can lead into an exchange that encompasses “How were the animals treated? How do you know what they are feeling? Who took care of you?”

Beyond triggering therapeutic conversations, my animals, especially the horses, serve as co-therapists. Animal-assisted therapy (AAT) is a “goal-directed intervention in which an animal that meets a specific criteria is an integral part of the treatment process…and is designed to promote improvement in human physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive functioning” (Standards of Practice for Animal-Assisted Activities and Therapy, DELTA Society, 2012).

Deliberately including animals in a treatment plan facilitates positive change, a reduction of mental health symptoms, improvements in physical
health, and the application of coping, emotional regulation, and mindfulness skills. The interaction between my therapy horse Jenny and the client is an active process of self-discovery and awareness about oneself. The horse provides immediate feedback by providing insight into one’s roles, responsibilities, and patterns, as well as the ongoing opportunity for skill development. My role is to help clients process and integrate this learning into their current situations.

In one instance, Mary, a victim of domestic violence, gained awareness into her lack of boundaries and developed assertiveness skills. The process began during an experiential activity when Jenny ignored Mary’s passive requests. Processing this, Mary gained insight into her boundaries and the emotional responses triggered from being unheard and unacknowledged. Practical application followed our conversations about boundaries and communication. Mary’s sense of mastery over her new skills was heightened when the horse responded to her assertive commands and negotiated an obstacle course metaphorically representing her fears and challenges. With additional support, Mary reinforced this work as she transferred the skills she learned in our sessions to other relationships.

Increasingly, animal-assisted therapy is demonstrating clinical merit for presenting concerns such as addiction, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, inter- and intra-personal conflict, truancy, deviance, attachment, and trauma. Through an animal’s responses, clients receive feedback on their mood-states and can practice mindfulness, relaxation, and emotional coping skills accordingly.

I have found the applicability of animal-assisted therapy widely encompassing due to the diversity of my animal co-therapists. One session saw Haven, an orange tabby-cat, reflect love and offer unconditional acceptance when he cuddled and purred on a client’s lap. This experience helped the client challenge his distorted thinking, as well as experience emotions beyond sadness and depression. Another time, a shy, introverted six-year-old formed a meaningful attachment with the therapy dog. Within a few sessions she was able to make requests, see the dog obey her commands, and engage with family and friends by talking about her relationship with her “special friend.”

Incorporating experimental learning in the form of engagement and interaction with an animal allows clients to rapidly and effectively work through their concerns and challenges. This occurs as they increase their awareness into thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and behaviors, then work to develop and practice the skills necessary to promote positive change in their life. The presence of animals as co-therapists reduces client resistance, as well as therapy interfering behaviors.

While many people can relate to animals, not everyone is knowledgeable about handling them. As large and sometimes intimidating animals, horses can be particularly useful in helping clients overcome fears and discomforts as they develop a sense of accomplishment and empowerment. With research increasingly supporting animal-related counseling, perhaps more people will sport dog photos on the wall, cat hair on their chairs, and horse pendants around their necks!

Rebecca Stares is the founder of Spirited Connections Counselling. You can visit spiritedconnections.ca or email info@spiritedconnections.ca to learn more about her program.
What do motivated social workers and award-winning body builders have in common? Both require people who are skilled planners, committed to constant improvement, and interested in overcoming challenges.

Leidia Siffledeen, RSW, SWDip, is an award-winning body builder as well as a social worker for the ABC Head Start Society. She works at LaPerle School, in Edmonton’s west end, with children three and a half and up to kindergarten age. “So many are behind the average child at that age,” says Siffledeen. “It can be a result of their environment or challenges with learning.”

For the past six years, Siffledeen’s role has been to help ensure children in the Head Start program enter the school system on par with other kids. She works in conjunction with a teacher, speech pathologist, special needs assistant, and children’s families. As well as managing intakes to see if applicants qualify for the program, she provides support for 32 families by providing home visits, running parent groups, and...
making referrals.

A typical day involves “arriving about 8:00 and checking messages. We have a meeting at 9:00 to discuss planning and the day. After the kids arrive about 9:20, we get them settled and I begin to call families on my list, provide support for them, and go on home visits to connect with them.”

Providing family support involves talking to mothers, fathers, and other caregivers to help them access additional community services, such as those relating to education and health. “A lot of the time I make referrals to agencies like the food bank.” Siffledeen wants parents to have as many resources as possible to help families manage their needs after they move beyond the program. She finds parents interested in being involved.

“Often, they just want to talk. We call almost every week to say ‘How are you? This is what your child is doing.’ We make sure they know that if they have any concerns or issues we can listen,” says Siffledeen. “Although they may have gone from place to place for help and been discouraged, they feel our caring. They don’t expect to get the level of support we provide but come to realize we really care for them as individuals.”

The Head Start program devises a personal learning program for each child and develops play experiences to support interests and needs. Volunteers help by reading to children, playing with them, and helping the teacher with day-to-day activities. “Families have told us how much better their kids become at expressing themselves,” says Siffledeen. “Some who could only say a few words before now say six- or seven-word sentences.”

The program provides free vision and dental screenings. Siffledeen recalls the impact of referring a girl for glasses. “She said ‘Wow! Everything looks so pretty!’ All of a sudden she could see and that stands out. For her it was huge.”

Parents describe their children as more settled after entering the program. “We hear so many positives—that their kids are happier, have learned more, and changed in many positive ways. Sometimes they start off withdrawn but learn how to play in a group and how to socialize.”

Siffledeen is responsible for writing individual progress reports. She also works to connect the ABC Head Start Society with Edmonton’s west end community and attends interagency meetings with other society-minded groups like Parentlink, the Boys and Girls Club, Health for Two, and many others.

Since first taking on the social work role at LaPerle School, Siffledeen finds there are more expectations now. “We have joint planning with our team to set goals for the children and have to meet consistently to ensure that’s being done for the classroom and families.”

In the long term, she would like to take on more projects relating to policy and try to get involved on committees that look at policy change and development. She enjoys taking courses, as well as bringing in practicum students. “I want to keep doing that because I learn from them. They provide fresh eyes and keep us on our toes.”

Siffledeen came to be a social worker after going back to school in her thirties. “I had some really positive experiences with teachers and social workers and wanted to give back.” She graduated from MacEwan University with a diploma in social work in 1992, then took a year of applied human service administration.

At the age of 45, Siffledeen began to tackle another challenge that intrigued her—bodybuilding. “I’ve always admired people who are able to bodybuild. I look at it as an art and admire the hard work and discipline it takes.”

Wanting to see if she could do it and where it would take her, Siffledeen began to train and compete with other women in her age and weight class. “It was hard with having a family, even though the kids were older. It’s a very isolated sport and you have to focus when it comes to the dieting. That was hard.”

Siffledeen says discipline intersects her two passions. “One works on yourself and the other on your values. Because I expect families to follow through with certain goals and expectations, I feel I should apply my expectations to myself.”

It seems to be working! Now 52, Siffledeen competed in Edmonton in June at the Winspear Centre and achieved three first place wins—in her weight class, age class, and overall.
When a friend turns stalker

From isolation and barriers to reprieve

The stalking

“It was dark as I got out of my car in the parking lot at work. Arthur approached me from behind, held me against a dumpster, and said he had a knife (though he later claimed it was only a pen). He held me with this ‘knife’ hidden in his shirt sleeve at my throat, looked into my eyes, but said nothing. It probably only lasted a minute but felt much longer and I had never been so scared. When Arthur finally moved his hand from my throat, I ran and drove away. A few hours later I called my boss and said I had to quit because of a medical emergency.”

Claire Fontaine* was a social work student when co-worker Arthur Barrett turned from friend to stalker. His behaviour only became extreme after they had known each other about two years. Intense harassment took place over five years, with the most extreme incidents occurring during a two-year period.

“He is the last person anyone would suspect of being a stalker,” says Claire. “He was soft spoken, seemingly kind, considerate, and timid. When we met, we were both in long term committed relationships and under no pretences that a romantic relationship would ensue. We would see each other at work and share laughs, not just between the two of us, but with a large group.”

Arthur began to confide in Claire, who tried to be supportive. “He wanted to talk on the phone and have coffee outside work. It all seemed very normal.” But requests for Claire’s time increased and Arthur expected her to be available. He sent from 50-100 text messages daily and appeared at her work, school, and home—even showing up when her plans were spontaneous.

Claire tried to be considerate. She explained work and volunteering commitments were going to mean less time

*Note: All names have been changed.
for him, but his response was unreasonable. “He accused me of being a horrible friend and abandoning him. He became extremely emotional and threatened to hurt himself.”

Efforts to reason only made Arthur more persistent and volatile. “He accused me of ‘making him fall in love’ with me and said I was a cruel person and a ‘whore’ for leading him to believe we would be together. This came as quite a shock as we had never had a non-platonic relationship. I experienced deep fear and guilt—questioning whether I had actually done something to cause him so much pain that he would behave in this manner!”

Arthur’s behaviour became more terrifying. “He accused me of many absurd things and threatened to make people hurt me. He told me over and over this was my fault, he would never ‘turn his back on our love,’ and I was ‘crazy’ for ‘making’ him act this way. He emailed me photos of myself throughout the day—while at school or volunteering. It was scary knowing I was being pursued.”

Each time she attempted to set boundaries, his behaviour escalated further. “I started to realize that no matter how much thought I put into gently trying to help him understand where I was coming from, he would not listen to reason. I then told him bluntly to leave me alone.”

### Barriers to getting help

Arthur and Claire shared mutual friends, making it awkward to turn to them for support. “I didn’t want to create gossip or further involve people and risk heightening the situation. I tried to talk to my family, but the situation was minimized.”

As a social worker, Claire felt hesitant to ask police or other professionals for help. “I feared what judgements would be made against me and what impact it might have on my career if I was to become the client of a future colleague.”

Eventually, Claire did contact the police but was initially told all she could do was hire a lawyer and pursue a lawsuit. She later learned this was not the case. “My experience with the police was not helpful. I was met with ambivalence and people who did not understand the dynamics of power and control.”

Claire found it difficult to learn what would happen if she lodged an official complaint. She wanted to know what protection would be offered and what consequences to her personal relationships or career might occur. “I was told I would have to report before I would be given any information about possible outcomes. It became a choice of ‘the devil you know or the devil you don’t’ and the one you know seems slightly easier to handle.”
The social work perspective
When the stalking began, Claire responded as a social worker and tried to understand Arthur’s perspective with patience and understanding. She found her skills helpful in some ways but detrimental in others. “Initially I excused some of his behaviours,” says Claire. “Perhaps I felt a greater sense of responsibility to help him understand I wasn’t trying to discontinue the friendship.”

As a social worker, Claire feels she may have found it more natural to endure the situation longer, as well as recognize the person’s behaviour was not really about her. “I tried to tell myself I was fine and could handle this.”

Claire notes her social work education did prove useful in teaching her the importance of self-care. “The concept of empowering through education was instrumental in my ability to remain sane inside insanity. Knowing the impacts of trauma, being controlled, and social isolation was extremely helpful. When I felt my most isolated, journaling was very powerful. It allowed me to process what I was going through when I did not feel I could reach out.”

She suggests social workers can best help stalking victims by listening and making themselves available in multiple ways, including email and telephone. “Someone being watched might not want to come to your office,” says Claire.

“Heavy work can often require help from a friend, but they may not want to talk about it. The work by friends and family is often important to ensure the person can continue to talk to you about it.”

“Victims need to know they are not responsible to try to fix or heal their perpetrators or empathize with them.” Claire also advises “Do not assume you know the limits of the person’s behaviour.”

Though her experience was clearly unwelcome, Claire feels it has made her a better social worker and person. “I really understand that perception is reality. When a client struggles with control issues and trauma or appears to have many options and social contacts but feels isolated, I have a much better understanding of how to be helpful.”

Feeling Safe
Claire did not feel secure until she changed her phone number multiple times, took a different job, stopped all association with mutual contacts, refrained from going places where he typically sought her, and moved in with her partner.

She eventually learned Arthur was hospitalized for mental health issues. “It took me a long time to feel like myself again. I had been in a constant state of panic for the better part of two years. Though I’ve done a lot of healing and have a lot of joy and restoration in my life, I don’t know that I will ever feel the same sense of extroversion or naive sense of freedom. Allowing my comfort zones to grow has been a challenging journey. Some things still make me very uncomfortable, like getting phone calls from blocked numbers or being alone in crowded public places. I’ve realized that I am a survivor and that it’s important for me to be gentle with myself too.”

Help for the criminally harassed
Katherine Davies, MSW, RSW, is a social worker with Community Services, City of Edmonton. For the past 20 years, she has been a member of one of Edmonton’s five spousal violence teams. Edmonton police receive about 7000 police reports a year relating to spousal abuse, some which involve harassment—the Canadian Criminal Code term for stalking. Davies provides intervention to people impacted by domestic violence and charges relating to criminal harassment. The teams respond to high risk cases.

“It is clear this woman experienced a very terrifying and traumatizing series of events,” says Davies. “People from..."
The isolation

In Fontaine’s words:

• “He mailed letters to members of my family (I believe he went through the phone book and sent one to everyone who shares my last name). The letters said I was an evil person, a whore that had promised my heart to him, and was carrying his child, and that I used street drugs to try to give myself a miscarriage. It was very upsetting to have to explain to the members of my family.”

• “I was always someone who loved to laugh and who was extroverted and enjoyed being around people. At that time I did not want to be around anyone and truly stopped enjoying life.”

• “My focus became waiting for the next threat, accusation, and piece of my life he would try to take away. I felt helpless and hopeless—like I was imprisoned in a terrible invisible place where no matter how much I tried to explain the distress I was in, no one else could see.”

• “I tried to speak with my partner, but he was already quite upset with the amount of harassment I was receiving and wanted to confront [Arthur]. My response was to comfort my partner and stop confiding in him about the situation. I felt he would be at risk if he confronted him and knew I would have to deal with the repercussion.”

• “As he knew all the places I enjoyed spending time, I could no longer go as I feared he would appear. In effect, I was cut off from all my support and coping systems. I had no one to talk to and nowhere to go to find respite. I was in a state of constant terror every single day for over two years. I stopped sleeping, started losing a dramatic amount of weight, started to become physically ill, experienced severe anxiety attacks, and stopped finding joy in things I had previously loved.”

Victims need to know they are not responsible to try to fix or heal their perpetrators or empathize with them. Do not assume you know the limits of the person’s behaviour.

all walks of life and from any profession can be victims of harassment. The teams are very familiar with the nature and form harassment can take. It can devastate a person’s life.

“Typically the police will investigate this situation to determine if that person is a victim of criminal harassment. Their responsibility is to pursue charges if they have enough evidence. It is the decision of the police to determine if charges will be laid. From there it goes to the crown prosecutor, then court.”

However, Davies notes that the job of police is not simply to place charges. “No police officer wants to see someone be a victim of criminal harassment. Their job is also to keep people safe. If they feel safety is a high priority, they will work in concert with the victim and social workers to ensure safety.”

In Edmonton, victims of criminal harassment who report to the police are provided with information on services and supports. They can also access assistance through many other agencies, including Edmonton Community Services, where staff are experienced in guiding victims in the process to access help through the system.

“Had this situation come to the attention of one of the Edmonton teams,” says Davies “I think it would have been a more positive experience. Edmonton has been a leader in responding to victims and making sure officers have been trained.” She notes that during an investigation, police may offer an opinion on what might happen but predictions are difficult because every case has different dynamics. Determining factors include whether it is the first time a person has committed an offence or whether there is a history.

“We spend a lot of time with victims and try to give them a sense of how things might unfold. They can provide a rich amount of detailed information that can help us assess the level of danger. We work hard to develop safety plans for them.”

Continued on page 28
Davies says even though criminal harassment is a serious criminal code offense, a first time offender may only be held in jail a short time. Her effort to protect victims can involve providing a security system to help with existing environment safety. She may also provide guidance for relocation, a name change, or full identity change, which eliminates every trace of a person’s history.

“An identity change is a complex and onerous thing for someone to undertake and not one you would advise lightly,” says Davies. “If children are involved, it becomes even more complicated. A complete identity change requires an application in court to seal any old information on the person.”

Social workers can help victims of stalking overcome fear that reporting will impact their reputations and careers by reminding them that people tend to respond with respect.

“The fear is real,” says Davies “but our experiences show it doesn’t damage anyone’s reputation.”

She describes a case where a person was being harassed by an ex-partner. After visiting the work site to talk about safety, the supervisor invited her back to provide an in-service with staff. “Their reaction was positive. People want the information because they don’t want to see anyone harmed. The fear of damage to the reputation is rooted in embarrassment but fortunately people recognize the victim is not the one committing an offence. We need to make clients understand there is no shame.”

Davies encourages anyone experiencing criminal harassment to come forward. “We can help,” says Davies. “Don’t try to cope with this alone. Call a community agency. Talk to others in the helping professions. Being a victim of criminal harassment is an isolating and fear-filled experience. No one should live in fear.”

Joan Marie Galat offers freelance writing, editing, and workshops. Visit joangalat.com to subscribe to writing tips in the MoonDot Muse newsletter.
CALL FOR PROPOSALS
2013 ACSW Annual Conference
Shaping our World: Where Social Work and Technology Meet
Wednesday, March 20 to Friday, March 22, 2013
Calgary Telus Convention Centre

Our world is increasingly impacted by technology. Our clients want to be friends on Facebook; colleagues want to have a virtual meeting on Skype; and professional development courses are delivered online. How can we navigate this ever-changing technological world? What ethical issues does electronic communication present? What guidelines should we follow to ensure best practice?

We invite proposals that address some aspect of our electronic world and how it impacts our profession. Proposals that focus on broader issues are welcome as long as they have a component that addresses our theme.

Deadline for proposals is September 28, 2012.

Please download the guidelines at:
acsw.ab.ca/pdfs/2013_call_for_proposals_2.pdf

Don’t miss the ACSW Holiday Socials!
In Calgary, we’ll meet on December 6 at Village Park Inn.
The Edmonton Holiday Social will be held November 29 at the Old Timer’s Cabin.
See you there!

Continued on page 30
For your information

Parkland Institute’s 16th Annual Fall Conference
Petro, Power and Politics
November 23 - 25, 2013

What does it mean to live and work in a province so dependent on oil and gas? This conference explores not only the economic issues surrounding oil and gas development, but also the social, cultural, and political consequences—ultimately, questions of power and the kind of society Albertans and Canadians desire. Our conference will be a place to discuss and workshop some of the above challenges that we, as citizens, are faced with.

Our Keynote Speaker is Ronald Wright and our closing speaker is Duff Conacher. Others guests include Tony Clarke, Andrew Nikiforuk, Laura Beny, Dylan Jones, Anna Zalik, Angela Carter and George Poitras as well as others.

For more information, call 780-492-8558 or visit the Parkland Institute’s website: ualberta.ca/parkland.

Healing Trauma With Energy Psychology

This Workshop is the complete 3-day version of the 1-day workshop given at the March, 2012, ACSW Conference. For those of you who wanted to take this Workshop but couldn’t, this is your chance to take the full course.

Regardless of how trauma happens, it can be debilitating and shrink our world and impoverish the people around us.

Advanced Integrative Therapy (AIT) is a specific system of Energy Psychology that releases the energy contained within the body as a result of trauma. When this energy is released, the person is able to heal at the physical, emotional and mental levels. This healing is permanent and gives the person back their life.

Presenters:

Murray Armstrong MSW, RSW, Certified AIT Basics Trainer
Victoria Danzig LCSW, Certified AIT Basics Trainer

Date: November 9, 10, & 11th, 2012, Friday – Saturday, 9am – 5 pm.
Sunday 9 am – 3 pm.
Place: Armstrongs’ Counselling Services, 10027 – 166 St. Edmonton, AB, www.ArmstrongsCounselling.com
Cost: $545 before October 9th, 2012, $595 after October 10, 2012

National Case Management Network of Canada Conference
October 1 - 2, 2012
“Early Bird” extension

(NCMC) is pleased to announce the extension of our special Early Bird “2 for 1” offer to September 7, 2012.

The official NCMC conference count down: Call for Abstracts : Closed
Early Bird 2-4-1: 7 weeks, September 7, 2012
Conference: 10 weeks, October 1st & 2nd, 2012
National Case Management Network of Canada
Don’t have membership? Join today atncmn.ca

For your information:
November 9, 10, & 11
Cost: $545 before October 9, $595 after October 10
Website: www.ArmstrongsCounselling.com

DEADLINE
for the WINTER 2012 issue of the Advocate is OCTOBER 15, 2012
All ad inquiries to Ilona Cardinal IlonaC@acsw.ab.ca
All editorial inquiries to Leslie MacKinnon LeslieM@acsw.ab.ca
Workshop:
Ethics in Social Work Practice: Dilemmas and Challenges
November 5, 2012, 9 AM – 4 PM
Rozsa Centre, University of Calgary

Dr. Kerry Bowman, a Canadian bioethicist and conservationist will present this workshop. Born in Montreal and now based in Toronto, Bowman is a frequent national and international public speaker best known for his wide-ranging work in the areas of bioethics and environmental protection.

Registration is now open:
ucalgary.ca/pd/Ethics_in_Social_Work_Practice

The Hincks-Dellcrest Centre - Gail Appel Institute
Brief and Narrative Therapies with Families, Couples and Individuals
Year-Long Clinical Extern Certificate Program
September 2012 - June 2013
REGISTER NOW; SOME SPACES AVAILABLE

About the Program: This course is scheduled for 20 full days from September 2012 to June 2013; one full day, every other week, alternating Fridays and Saturdays.

You will be introduced to current knowledge and skill development about how to work with the effects of problems such as depression, trauma, eating disorders, violence, abuse and more. In addition, you will learn realistic ways of insulating yourself from the effects of professional fatigue when working with complex, distressful issues.

- Key concepts and operating principles, skills that you can apply in your work environment and everyday life
- Philosophical positions that support brief and narrative practices
- How to form intentional questions suited for the different stages of a therapy session and the overall therapeutic process
- Ways of conducting respectful, collaborative narrative therapy from the very first session right through to the therapeutic closure

Faculty: Jim Duvall, Eric King, Tod Augusta-Scot, Bonnie Miller, Scot Cooper, David Pare, Karen Young, Jill Freedman, Nancy Webb

To register or for more details, please contact:
Mary Anne Van Rooyen
Tel: 416-972-1935 x3233
mvanrooyen@hincksdellcrest.org
or visit: www.hincksdellcrest.org/training.

Call for Abstracts:
Accelerating Primary Care
Sunday, November 18, 2012 Tuesday, November 20, 2012
Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta
For more information, visit buksa.com/apcc/

Reserve the date!
End Exclusion 2012
November 28 & 29, 2012
National Hotel Suites, Ottawa ON

A co-sponsored event by Council of Canadians with Disabilities, Canadian Association for Community Living, and Canada Without Poverty, with the theme of focusing on Disabling Poverty and Enabling Citizenship.

For more information as it develops, email Maureen at Maureen@ccdonline.ca.

Friends of Medicare Welcomes New Executive Director
Sandra Azocar

Friends of Medicare is proud to welcome its new Executive Director, Sandra Azocar. Sandra comes to the organization with a strong background in health care advocacy and social reform. With a decades long career as a Child Welfare Worker with the Government of Alberta and three terms at the Vice President of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, Sandra will be a strong voice to ensure that Alberta’s health care system is strengthened and expanded.

“I’m thrilled to be starting this new position, healthcare has long been an important issue for me and I welcome the challenge of protecting our valued system in Alberta,” says Azocar.

Azocar will be spearheading a number of initiatives for Friends of Medicare as we head into the fall and the next Legislative Session.

“We’ve seen some important issue arise over the summer and it’s going to be important to mobilize Friends of Medicare to ensure the Government knows that we won’t stand for further privatization and closures,” says Azocar.

Friends of Medicare recognizes the opening of the new Copeman Clinic in Edmonton as well as the closure of a public Long Term Care Facility in Carmangay as recent examples of the Government’s continued attack on the public health system. With Sandra Azocar at the helm Friends of Medicare will be renewing their efforts to stand up for public health care in the province and will work to ensure that all Albertan’s have access to the timely and world class health care they deserve.

Continued on page 32
For your information

The Health Sciences Association of Alberta represents more than 22,000 professional, technical, and support employees in Alberta’s health care system. We bargain for fair wages and decent working conditions for our members.

We also raise public awareness about the important role of allied health professionals including social workers. www.hsaa.ca

Alberta Health Services
Protection of Children Abusing Drugs (PChAD)

If your team/group would like to learn more about PChAD or for a presentation at your site, please contact:

Donita Armstrong (780) 422-2850 or
Sharon Roberts (780) 644-2998

8th International Short Break Association 2012
Wednesday, October 10 - Friday, October 12, 2012 - 04:00
Respite Conference

For more information, visit: isba2012.net.

The Many Faces of Addiction
Tuesday, October 16 - Wednesday, October 17, 2012
4th Annual Addiction Symposium
Presented by Bellwood Health Services

For more information, visit: bellwood.ca.

Canadian Association on Gerontology
41st Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting
Aging in a Changing World
October 18 - 20, 2012
Hyatt Regency, Vancouver, BC

The CAG Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting is the primary multi-disciplinary conference in Canada for those interested in individual and population aging. It features world renowned keynote speakers from the health and social sciences, cutting-edge symposia, opportunities to present papers and posters, and an exciting social program. We also invite participation in our exhibit hall and sponsorship opportunities.

For more information, visit: cagacg.ca

2012 Alberta FASD Conference:
Creating Connections, Building Relationships,
Growing Communities
October 22-23, 2012
Delta Edmonton South Hotel & Conference Centre
Edmonton AB

This year’s multidisciplinary conference on FASD will have a special focus on creating connections, building relationships, and growing communities. Three keynote speakers—Dr. Patch Adams, Dr. Samantha Nutt, and Dr. Michael Ungar—will each bring a unique perspective on how we can work better together at a family, community and global level to help those in need.

For more information: Amanda Amyotte at Alberta Human Services: Amanda.Amyotte@gov.ab.ca or 780-422-6494 fasd-cmc.alberta.ca.

Continued on page 34
UP AND DOWN THE WORRY HILL:
User-Friendly CBT for OCD and Anxiety in Children & Adolescents
with AUREEN WAGNER, PH.D., author of Worried No More
CALGARY, AB | Oct. 16 & 17, 2012

NEW PERSPECTIVES IN ADDICTIONS
Challenging Us All to Examine Current Research and Techniques
JOHN BRADSHAW, M.A., LISA NAJAVITS, PH.D., ABPP, MEL VINCENT, M.D., AND MORE! SEE FULL LINEUP AT JACKHIROSE.COM
NANAIMO, BC | Sep 12–14, 2012

WORKING WITH ANGRY & RESISTANT CHILDREN & YOUTH:
Strategies for Fostering Motivation, Self-Discipline and Resilience
with ROBERT BROOKS, PH.D., author of Raising Resilient Children
EDMONTON, AB | Oct. 26, 2012

QUALITY MENTAL HEALTH & EDUCATION WORKSHOPS
FALL 2012

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER:
Practical Strategies & Techniques for Professionals from Diverse Disciplines
with JOHN PRESTON, PSY.D., author of Counseling Survivors of Traumatic Events
CALGARY, AB | Nov 8 & 9, 2012

HEALING AND TREATING TRAUMA, ADDICTIONS & RELATED DISORDERS
3RD ANNUAL Canada’s Premier Psychotherapy Conference
JOAN BORYSENKO, PH.D. STEPHANIE COVINGTON, PH.D. MICHAEL LEEDS, PH.D. PAT LOVE, ED.D. BILL O’HANLON, M.S. JOHN PRESTON, PSY.D. ROB SCAER, M.D. RON SIEGEL, PSY.D. MEL VINCENT, M.D. PATRICK ZIERTEN, EMBA, M.A.
EDMONTON, AB | November 28, 29 & 30, 2012

For further details and registration visit, www.jackhirose.com
For your information

Health & Wellbeing in Children, Youth and Adults With Developmental Disabilities
Challenging Behaviour—The Tip of the Iceberg
November 15-17, 2012, Vancouver, BC

Conference objectives:

- To promote best practices in physical and mental health for individuals with developmental disabilities
- Recognize the multifactorial determinants of challenging behaviour
- Recognize the role of traumatic experiences in understanding challenging behaviour
- Maximize health and wellbeing in order to minimize disability and improve quality of life
- Share knowledge and common experiences with others working in the field.

For further information please visit interprofessional.ubc.ca or contact us at ian.ipce@ubc.ca or 604-827-3112.

Another day, another crisis averted.

The Alberta Union of Provincial Employees is proud to represent more than 75,000 Albertans who provide quality public services to the people of our province.

Among these hard-working Albertans are more than 2,500 social services workers including Child and Youth Care Counsellors, Human Services Workers, Psychology Assistants and Psychologists who work every day to make sure their clients are safe and on track to successful lives.

AUPE is committed to a society in which all Albertans can expect fair public services provided by committed, well-trained public employees.

www.aupe.org

University of Southern California Social Work
7th International Conference on Social Work in health and Mental Health
Research to Practice: Completing the Circle
June 23-27, 2013
Los Angeles CA

Visit pathways2013.com for more information.

Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families
Workshop and Conference Resource

Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families has an extensive list of workshops and conferences, searchable by location and topic. Visit aascf.com and go to Workshops/Conferences.

AASCF Annual Conference
Edmonton January 24-25, 2013

Mark your calendar and let your Board members know we will once again be holding our networking event for Board members. It will be on January 23, 2013 at the Fantasyland Hotel. We will be having a learning session, and a networking event along with dinner on that evening. We are also planning a few sessions at the conference for board members. So we hope to see everyone out. Registration Available Soon.

For more information, keep checking aascf.com.

Canadian Association of School Social Workers & Attendance Counsellors (CASSWAC)
National Conference 2013
Date TBA
Calgary, AB

The CASSWAC National Conference 2013 will be held in Calgary, Alberta. Details TBA.

Please keep checking the website for more information: casswac.ca.
Did you know...

- **Mental Illness Awareness Week**  
  September 30 - October 6, 2012

- **Child Abuse Awareness Month**  
  October 1 - 31, 2012

- **Learning Disability Month**  
  October 2012

- **National Family Week**  
  October 1 - 7, 2012

- **National Child Day**  
  November 20, 2012

- **November is Family Violence Prevention Month in Alberta**  
  November 1 - 30, 2012

- **Adoption Awareness Month**  
  November 1 - 30, 2012

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**ACSW’s Partners in Advocacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Website</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health</td>
<td>aamimh.ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arusha</td>
<td>arusha.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada Without Poverty</td>
<td>cwp-csp.ca</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada Council on Social Development</td>
<td>ccsd.ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton Social Planning Council</td>
<td>edmontonsocialplanning.ca</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Medicare</td>
<td>friendsofmedicare.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater Edmonton Alliance</td>
<td>greateredmontonalliance.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Interest Alberta</td>
<td>pialberta.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parkland Institute</td>
<td>ualberta.ca/parkland</td>
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</tbody>
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**WORKSHOPS COMING TO ALBERTA IN 2012/2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOTIVATING CHANGE - Strategies for Approaching Resistance</td>
<td>EDMONTON: December 5-6, 2012;  EDMONTON: December 13-14, 2012</td>
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**HELPING COMMUNITIES ORGANIZATIONS WITH ISSUES OF CRISIS AND TRAUMA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VIOLENCE THREAT ASSESSMENT - Planning and Response</td>
<td>EDMONTON: March 25, 2013;  CALGARY: March 27, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>GENDER AND SEXUAL IDENTITY IN YOUTH</td>
<td>EDMONTON: April 19, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNSELLING SKILLS - An Introduction and Overview</td>
<td>EDMONTON: June 12-14, 2013;  EDMONTON: June 19-21, 2013</td>
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</tbody>
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All CTRI Workshops are approved by ACSW: CATEGORY A COMPETENCY CREDIT

To register or for more information please visit our website at www ctrinstitute com

www ctrinstitute com  info@ctrinstitute com  204 452 9199
in the news

S h a p i n g o u r W o r l d: W h e r e S o c i a l W o r k a n d T e c h n o l o g y M e e t

C A L L F O R P R O P O S A L S
acsw.ab.ca/pdfs/2013_call_for_proposals_2.pdf
Deadline: SEPTEMBER 28, 2012

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