

More than 600,000 professionals in the United States hold social work degrees. The Veterans Administration is the largest employer of social workers, with 6,000+ social work practitioners assisting veterans and their families.

Help Celebrate Social Work Month

Dr. Nancy Chavkin

A Message from the Director

March is Social Work month. The theme this year is "Social Workers Inspire Community Action." As practitioners and students of Social Work, community involvement is what leads many of us to the profession. Social Work month is a good time to remember our



calling and take action in our communities, reminding people of who we are and the good works that we can lead and inspire.

I encourage you this month to strategize for the year ahead ways that you can bring attention to yourselves as social workers. Some examples are serving on community panels, writing letters to the editor, and writing columns for newspapers or journals. A good way to get an article online (where many of us spend our time these days) is to contribute a piece to HelpStartsHere.org. Don't miss an opportunity to tout social work and the many valuable community projects



you and your colleagues are involved in through FaceBook, Twitter, and other social networking sites.

Go to socialworkers.org and click on Social Work Month 2010 to take advantage of the many community involvement suggestions outlined there to help heighten social work's profile this month—and throughout the year.

Make Self-Care a Priority

Many people think that when you're in school, it's only natural to be overwhelmed with attending classes, writing papers, and gearing up for field placements and internships. Students often think that self-care can come later, once they get through school and are on the job.

Employees, especially during

the first years, often think that to make the best impression on supervisors and clients, they should put off self-care until they have established themselves.

Do the math. If you take this approach to school and work, self-care gets left off the list entirely! It shouldn't.

Experts agree that exercise,

hobbies, nights out on the town, and time with friends just hanging out are all viable approaches to self-care and are key to maintaining physical and mental health.

Your clients and family all need you to be healthy; self-care is a vital investment in you—and their—future.

Meditation anyone?

CCF Welcomes AL Intern David Gwin

Right about now, David Gwin is breathing a sigh of relief. After all, he has almost finished his coursework for an MSW with an emphasis in Administrative Leadership. Now the fun begins, and he's kicking off his "fun" semester with his final internship at the Center for Children and Families located on campus at Swinney House. David will also be involved with many projects in support of Veterans, service men and women and their families led by Dr. Kathy Selber. He's also working on a legislative project he

completed for a policy class to transform it into an article to submit to a peer-reviewed journal.

Even though he took the AL route with his degree program, David considers himself a direct-practice kind of guy. He helped develop a project using Hip Hop to help reach high-risk youth. He is very interested in Gestalt Psychology and participates in a group that explores the hero myth as elaborated by Joseph Campbell



in his many talks and publications.

If you see David on campus, give him a shout!

Ethics and Foster Care Training

Mark your calendars for these upcoming training workshops on ethics and for CPS/Title IV-E foster care and adoption workers in Texas. Ethics workshops will be led by Dr. Dorinda Noble, Ph.D., LCSW, who is Director of the School of Social Work at Texas State, and Mr. Andrew Marks, LMSW, coordinator of the BSW program and a Senior Clinical Lecturer at the school.

Date and locations:

San Antonio, Jan. 21, 1:30-4:45 pm
San Antonio, Jan. 22, 9 am-12:15
Belton, Feb. 11, 1:30-4:45 pm
Waco, Feb. 12, 9 am-12:15
Austin, April 16, 9 am-12:15.

Dr. Angela Ausbrooks, LMSW, an assistant professor at Texas State, will be presenting a workshop for foster and adoptive parents entitled "Managing Difficult Child Behaviors."

This workshop will be held Feb. 6, from 9 am-Noon with a second session at 1:30-4:30 at CASA of Central Texas in New Braunfels, 1619 E. Common St., Building C, Suite 301. Registration deadline is Jan. 29 at 5:00 pm.

To register, fax your information to 512.245.1958 or you can send an e-mail to Trainings4E@txstate.edu. Attendees earn 3 C.E.U. credits.

Hail and Farewell

A big hearty welcome goes out to **Terra Thurwatcher** and **Courtney Gehrler**—new students in the Title IV-E BSW program. Both Terra and Courtney are with Region 7 (Austin). They'll be hitting the books in a serious way this Spring to prepare them for a child-welfare career with Department of Family and Protective Services.

We'd also like to welcome new student workers **Sara Wood** and **Olivia Williams**, who will be helping out this semester at the Center for Children and Families. They'll join continuing student worker **Brandi Brown** and graduate assistant **Arnie Williams** at CCF. Welcome all.

Everyone at CCF bids farewell to **Elena Gibson** for her years of service. Elena joined the Center in February 2006 as our training specialist for the Foster Parent and Ethics workshops. Elena also helped coordinate the annual Roundtable Conference for our Title IV-E contract.

Sylvia Carmona: For the Love of Kids

When Sylvia Carmona graduated with an MSW from Texas State in the summer of 2006, CPS was not at the top of her list for places to work. She had worked as a BSW at a children’s home for 12-and-a-half years, and she was licensed as a Child Care Administrator. The new MSW grad wanted to try something different and applied for more than 30 positions in various fields, among them CPS. With the pressure on to pay back student loans, a CPS offer came through and seemed too good to turn down.

Sylvia started with CPS two months after graduation in July 2006 as a Conservatorship caseworker. Despite her new job helping ease the burden of student-loan repayments, she still wasn’t sold on CPS as a permanent career path and continued to examine her options. When children in her case load began saying that she’d probably be gone in a few months, their message hit home. “I realized how important consistency is to these children,” she says. That realization sealed her fate.

A year later, which is unusually early at CPS, she earned an early promotion to Conservatorship supervisor. In 2008, Carmona seized an opportunity to supervise a pilot program known as the Intensive Conservatorship Practice and Permanency Initiative (IPPI). Carmona had the opportunity to participate with others in helping to map out how the new experimental unit would be staffed and organized. The idea would be to carry lighter caseloads and to evaluate
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“We need to be sensitive to the needs of kids in Foster Care and help each other master important parenting skills.”

Why Foster Care Training Matters

Foster parents face many challenges in carrying out the important work that they do, but support is near at hand, thanks to the many workshops held annually for Foster Care and Adoptive parents as part of the university’s commitment to Title IV-E in-service workshops. Dr. Angela Ausbrooks

presented seminars last year that focused on the cultural heritage of kids in Foster Care. This year, she will address another important area—taking a positive approach to behavior management through improved parenting skills.

Dr. Ausbrooks says she enjoys these workshops because they

provide opportunities for Foster and Adoptive Parents to learn new approaches and to share ideas that have worked well for them in the past.



Spanish Resources on the Web

The Child Welfare Information Gateway provides a wealth of resources to help you and your clients, so if your clients “hablan español,” no problem. Go to www.childwelfare.gov/spanish/ where you’ll find a translation link for child welfare terms from English to Spanish and from Spanish to English.

There are also many handouts you can download in Spanish for your clients that explain how to prevent child abuse and neglect, how to locate organizations that can help in emergency situations, information for handling teen runaways, how to report suspected abuse or neglect, and a national foster care

and adoption directory.

If you’re brushing up on your Spanish, these materials are a great vocabulary builder.

No hay necesidad de esperar.
¡Buena suerte!





The Center for Children and Families is located at Swinney House on the Texas State University-San Marcos campus.

Gearing Up for Roundtable

One of the highlights of the year is the annual Title IV-E Roundtable. The Roundtable is for networking, seminars, keynote speakers, and trading tips on how to be more effective in the partnership between the agency and university partners. In late January, organizers gathered in Austin for a mid-year planning session to identify themes

and keynotes for June's Roundtable.

If you haven't yet attended this annual event, carve out some time on your busy calendar to make the trip. The Roundtable will be held in New Braunfels this year, June 3-4. We want to make this year's Roundtable the most well-attended event so far to increase networking opportunities.

Dr. Karen Brown, coordinator of the yearly Roundtables, promises an exciting line-up of activities.

See you there.



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Read More Books

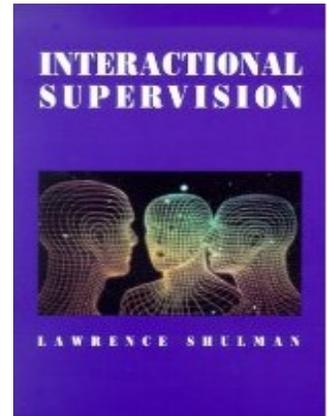
One of the key benefits that comes from attending the Title IV-E Roundtable is the networking that happens. Often someone has a good idea drawn from a book that has helped them and could be helpful to you. Here are a couple of books recommended at last year's Roundtable.

If you are a supervisor or aspire to be one, consider

reading *Interactional Supervision* by Lawrence Shulman. Some attendees found this book to be quite helpful.

Another recommended book focuses on the cultural perspective of our work. *Child Abuse and Culture: Working with Diverse Families* by Lisa Aronson Fontes.

Treat yourself to a good read while enhancing your knowledge base.



Carmona Profile (cont'd.)

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how quality of care is influenced by more intense involvement with children. The program will run through December (2010) and could influence how Conservatorship cases are handled in the state in the future.

Carmona was also recently one of 24 DFPS employees chosen for the Supervisor Leadership Program. Even

with her stellar upward path as a caseworker and supervisor, she still considers herself a life-long learner with many challenges to face and overcome.

"I know I'm not the best supervisor I can be," she says. "I still work toward increasing my knowledge and enhancing my leadership skills."

Carmona is an alumna of the Center for Children and Families, where she completed her

Administrative Leadership internship. The Center hopes they helped "plant the seed" and they couldn't be prouder.

