

MEDIAWATCH

March – April 2006





IMMIGRATION LAWS COULD HINDER SOCIAL WORKERS

By Donna McCollum (March 29, 2006)

Everyday in East Texas immigrants are helped by social workers. They help the newcomers with transitions. Now there's a concern the political mood on immigration will make their job of helping people more difficult. Stephen F. Austin State University Social Work Director **Dr. Linda Morales** said, "It puts us in a real bind. Our primary concern is meeting the basic needs of whatever clients come to us."

Social workers provide for the basic of needs to immigrants. They provide food, shelter and medical care, no questions asked. Morales explained, "Part of our code of ethics says that our concern is about any oppressed population and certainly many of our immigrants are oppressed, and have not been given everything they are needing and so it's what we're about."

With fears of "foreign invaders," proposed legislation goes so far to require social service agencies to ask clients their immigration status. Social service providers say they don't want their 'client-provider' relationship hindered. Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital's chief nursing official, Beth Knight said, "Right now we are just providing care and we don't care what their status is. We just want to provide the best care we can to all people."

But the federal government is enticing agencies such as hospitals. If the right questions aren't asked hospitals could lose government subsidies. The hospitals financial services director, Suzanne Thompson explained, "We're not actually able to ask the patient if they are an illegal immigrant. However, we can do some determination on the backside on whether or not they would qualify other additional programs here through the United States."

The President of the National Association of Social Workers, **Dr. Elvira Craig de Silva** doesn't want social service workers placed in the role of "de facto immigration investigators." That alone would go against the policy of so many service agencies. Morales said, "It depends on the agency they're in. Really they just try to meet the needs and often they just don't ask. And that puts them in a bind, should we ask or not."

Morales continues to instruct social service students to think of a person's needs. "What we teach our students is to look at what the needs are and just to see that children are here that their needs are met, people who are in medical crisis get their needs met and we do not focus on the legal issues."

Social workers will be pushing for fair immigration laws. East Texas social workers have the right senator to talk to concerning this issue. U.S. Senator John Cornyn is the chairman of the Immigration and Border Security subcommittee. This week Cornyn discussed the latest developments on border security and immigration reform with Nacogdoches leaders. At this point the discussion probably didn't center on the social workers' concerns. Their main goal is healthy families, no matter where they come from.



OPPONENTS RALLY AGAINST U.S. IMMIGRATION BILL

By Margaret Besheer (March 8, 2006)

In an interview about immigration reform, **Elvira Craig de Silva**, president of the National Association of Social Workers, says NASW opposes the legislation because under it any group that helps undocumented immigrants could be considered criminals. "It would endanger the human rights and civil liberties of immigrants and it would make the jobs of social workers perilous," she says.

TOP HEADLINES



Q & A: WHAT CAREGIVERS SHOULD KNOW

By Vikki Valentine (March 29, 2006)

Sarah Gupta, a social worker and director of support services for the Brain Tumor Society, provided insight into the emotional roller coaster of caring for a loved one who is sick. She comments that feelings of grief, anger and compassion are all a normal part of caring for a sick loved one. Sarah notes that after a loved one dies, caregivers often don't know what to do. "Getting support from the very beginning is going to help you cope in the most effective way possible. I hear people say they just want things to get back to normal, but you're making a new normal. You have to realize that things have changed, or you not going to cope with what has happened."



THE MULTITASKING GENERATION

By Claudia Wallis (March 27, 2006)

Teenagers are e-mailing, IMing, and downloading music, all of this while writing their history essay. Researchers, teachers and parents are concerned about what these distractions and connectivity to electronic gadgets is doing to their brains and to their family life. In reaction to this phenomenon, colleges and universities from all over the country are blocking Internet access during lectures. University of Wisconsin School of Social Work Professor **Aaron Bower**, tells his students not to treat him like a TV. "They have to think of me as a real person talking. I want to have them thinking about things we're talking about."



QUELLING WAR'S AFTERSHOCKS

By Chris Booker (March 19, 2006)

A recent study from Walter Reed Army Medical Center found that 35 percent of troops returning from Iraq have sought help for a mental health issue. Of this group, 12

percent have been diagnosed with a serious disorder. **Ed Klama**, a social worker at Hines VA Hospital outside Chicago, began counseling combat veterans in 1970 after he was drafted and sent to the 101st Airborne Division's psychiatric unit in Vietnam. He says: "A lot of vets get back from the war, they want to pick up on their lives, they don't want to spend a lot of time in the VA. So they attempt to put it all behind them and get back into the mainstream. But, after a while they find that their experiences have set them a little aside from the mainstream." The VA is the largest employer of social workers in the country with 4,400 social workers.



WOMEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE

By Robert Bazell (March 3, 2006)

A recent study by Columbia University notes that addiction programs need to focus more on the specific needs of women who suffer from addictions. **Dr. Stephanie Covington**, a clinical social worker, from the Institute for Relational Development notes that these groups should work on tearing down the false sense of self and work on building a new sense of self for women confronting addictions.



CAREER EXPLORATION: SOCIAL WORK

By Joan Tupponce (April 19, 2006)

In their jobs, social workers help people help themselves through difficult situations. Through education, training and dedication, social workers provide assistance in many different practice areas including health, mental health, child welfare, end of life, adolescent health, HIV/AIDS and family violence. Dean of the School of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University, **Frank Baskind**, says: "Social workers need the capacity to care about people and the desire to enrich the quality of people's lives. They should have the openness to learn and be self-reflective about experiences they encounter as a student and also when they are working with people. They need critical thinking and problem solving skills. They should also have an interest in social and economic justice."

MORE TOP HEADLINES

The New York Times

MENTAL HEALTH THERAPISTS FACE FINANCIAL STRESS AS FEES STAGNATE

By Coeli Carr (March 26, 2006)

Like many other health professionals, mental health practitioners like **Jessica Hinterman**, a licensed clinical social worker in private practice outside Chicago, say that there are feeling an economic pinch, partly because of insurance reimbursement schedules that they say have not kept pace with their expenses. Manhattan licensed clinical social worker **Dava Weinstein** volunteers on a committee that deals with reimbursement issues for clinical social

workers at the New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Among the top complaints from social workers about health insurers and the managed care industry are reduced fees, late payments and “inappropriate assessment of the needs of patients.” Manhattan private practice social worker **Lynne Spevack** consults with other social workers on how to expand their practices and leads monthly meetings for the NASW New York City Chapter on topics like practice-building and marketing. She says: “We can learn to ethically sell ourselves. It’s a skill set. There are no reasons people need to be leaving the profession.”

SOCIAL WORKERS MAKING NEWS

DYING WITH DIGNITY

North Shore Magazine (IL) •

By Stephanie Fosnight (March 2006)

Hospice social worker **Jack Shauger** is not just a caregiver to clients at Midwest Palliative & Hospice CareCenter, he’s a problem-solver. He arranges services. He answers questions. And sometimes, if the hospice patient, is alone, he visits with them. Shauger says his best experiences in 10 years of doing hospice social work are when he can bring families together. “You’ve taken something unspeakable like death and made it speakable,” he says.

COUNSELORS TEND TO MIND AND SPIRIT

Charlotte Observer • By Scott Dodd (March 3, 2006)

Social worker **Steph Passaro** complements the doctors and nurses on a disaster emergency team in New Orleans. **Cheryl McAlphin**, a private practice social worker, has traveled all over the country on specialized medical emergency teams. They have two roles – treating disaster victims and counseling their colleagues. McAlphin comments that first responders tend to work until they collapse. She looks for signs of fatigue and stress that can impede their ability to do their jobs.

MORE ATTENTION URGED FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN

Worcester Telegram & Gazette •

By Nathaniel Cheever (March 30, 2006)

With an estimated 1.5 million children in the United States with parents in jail, a spike in incarceration of women in

recent years has become an increasingly complicated problem. At a conference on women in prison, **Gary Bailey**, immediate past president of NASW, stresses the need for social justice and more fairness toward imprisoned women. He cites social work as the “vehicle for change” in an increasingly violent society, and stressed the need for “equality, equity and fairness” to achieve social justice.

SOCIAL WORK SHOWCASED ON ISSUES AND ANSWERS

WKYT-TV (KY) • By Jim Freeman (April 3, 2006)

NASW Executive Director **Elizabeth Clark**, Dean of the University of Kentucky College of Social Work **Kay Hoffman**, and Southeast Kentucky MSW Program Coordinator **Deirdra Robinson** provided their expertise on a cable television program dedicated to the role of social work in rural eastern Kentucky, where quality health and mental health care is a concern. Other topics covered on this program included law enforcement, education and social work careers.

STUDENTS DRAWING ON THE PAIN OF HURRICANES

The Advocate (LA) • By Charles Lussier (April 9, 2006)

One of the less-publicized challenges arising from last fall’s hurricanes is the mental health problems of the children who survived the disasters. Social workers and other mental health professionals are concerned about the impending hurricane season and the stress on the families. School social workers are trying to screen displaced students to make sure they are coping well.

FOSTER YOUTH WOULD GET FREE TUITION IN NEW BILL

San Francisco Chronicle •
By Janine DeFao (April 17, 2006)

A bill being introduced in California will provide foster care youth with free tuition to a state university. This will enable **Allan Romero** to complete his education to become a social worker and help other foster youths like himself. According to the Youth Law Center, fewer than 10 percent of foster youth in California attend college.

CHILD PROTECTION IS GOAL OF CENTER

The Detroit Free Press •
By Jack Kresnak (April 24, 2006)

Children’s Hospital of Michigan’s new Child Protection Center specializes in the diagnosis of child maltreatment. Social worker **Martha Kerr** is part of a team of evaluation experts who can assess children for signs of abuse and maltreatment. This program, Kids Talk, is complemented by the medical component of the hospital.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR/OP-EDS

The Oakland Tribune
Failing Children and Families
(March 17, 2006)

Social work student **Edith Rodrigues** stated her concern about the future cuts to child welfare services because resources are already limited. “The **National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics** states social workers must meet the basic needs of children and families; however, how can a social worker meet the basic needs of clients when services are being cut...The goal of child welfare social workers is to maintain the families together, and without the extra income from the state it will be difficult for families to reunify.”

The Syracuse Post-Standard
Article confused terminology on social work
(April 9, 2006)

Social worker **Ann Jamison** wrote: “When I read the article [about the abuse of a child], I was confused about your writers’ confusing interchange of the appellations ‘social workers’ and ‘child protective workers.’ The title ‘social worker’ refers to a person who has been educated by an institute of higher learning as a professional social worker, receiving a bachelor of social work and/or master of social work degree...Unless the DSS child protective workers mentioned in the article possess a social work degree, please refrain from referring to them as ‘social workers,’ a specific professionally degreed title.”

Syracuse Post Standard Editor’s note: You and others have pointed out a distinction that the newspaper should consider in future reporting on social workers and child protective workers.

The Detroit News
Social Katrinas threaten to overwhelm society’s under-funded levees
(April 25, 2006)

Paula Allen-Meares, dean of the University of Michigan School of Social Work, wrote: “The faculty, staff and students at the University of Michigan School of Social Work work in collaboration with communities such as Detroit and Flint, cities with seriously neglected economic and institutional supports and disproportionate numbers of low-income people. Every day we see those who, although they have strengths and ambition, have been left behind and ignored. It is with these community members we partner to identify and quantify the problems they face, and with whom we join in advocating for more efficient ways to repair breaches in their community levees.”

TIMELY NEWS



SOCIAL WORKERS RETHINK JOB SAFETY

A Texas slaying brings new steps

By Liz Austin (March 19, 2006)

The slaying of Child Protective Services Social Work administrator Sally Blackwell in Texas in March has social workers from all over the county re-evaluating the steps they take to keep themselves safe and their employers examining what they can do to better protect their employees. Blackwell's death has not been directly connected to her job, but relatives said she had mentioned threats in her position as program director, overseeing several offices of caseworkers.

In the *Associated Press* article, the Center for Workforce Studies research highlights the importance of social worker safety:

“A study released last week by the National Association of Social Workers found 55 percent of 5,000 licensed social workers surveyed said they face personal safety issues on the job. Sixty percent of them said their employers had not adequately addressed their concerns.”

“And a 2002 association survey of 800 child welfare specialists found 19 percent had been victims of violence and 63 percent had been threatened at some point in their careers.”

“But, it usually takes a tragedy to spur action on the state or federal level,” association spokeswoman Allison Nadelhaft said.

This story ran in nearly 50 publications, including:

<i>Austin Statesman</i>	<i>Dallas Morning News</i>
<i>Forbes</i>	<i>Guardian Unlimited</i> (UK)
<i>Houston Chronicle</i>	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>
<i>New York Newsday</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>San Diego Union Tribune</i>	<i>Seattle Post Intelligencer</i>
<i>The Washington Post</i>	

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF BOSTON STUNS STATE BY ENDING ADOPTIONS

March, 2006

The Archbishop of Boston announced that Catholic Charities will end its adoption work, deciding to abandon

its founding mission, rather than comply with a state law requiring that gays be allowed to adopt children. Catholic Charities said that after much reflection and analysis, they could not reconcile church teaching that placement of children in gay homes is “immoral” with Massachusetts law prohibiting discrimination against gays.

Response to the announcement by social service and gay-rights groups was swift and harsh:

BAD-FAITH PITCH FOR BIGOTRY

By Carol Trust and Mark Gianino (March 11, 2006)



How interesting that the Archdiocese of Boston has chosen March to announce that Catholic Charities would halt all adoptions rather than have the agency allow same-sex couples to adopt. Interesting in that March is Social Work Month – and we as a profession are compelled to speak out on the issue of same-sex adoptions too...Ultimately, there is no inherent “right to adopt.” Yet, at the same time all prospective adoptive parents should be given the same equal consideration and the sexual orientation of the parents should not be a determining factor in assessing suitability for adoptive parenting...Bound by our *Social Work Code of Ethics* forbidding discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, social workers would be forced to choose between their obligations to their professional code and obedience to the church. As social workers, celebrating our profession this month, we hope that reason will override ideology.

FAMILY FUSE

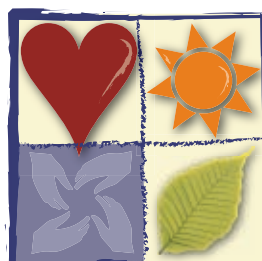
By Dahlia Lithwick (March 11, 2006)



There are no data to support the claim that children raised by married gay parents fare worse than children raised by heterosexual parents, there are no data to suggest that foster care is preferable to gay parenting. That's why virtually every serious child welfare entity, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Child Welfare League of America, the National Association of Social Workers, and the American Psychological Association, recognize that gay parents are no worse than heterosexual ones.

SOCIAL WORK MONTH

Social Work Month is an opportunity to highlight the important role that social workers play in the lives of millions of Americans. NASW Chapters, Schools of Social Work and organizations all over the country celebrated the Social Work Month theme this year:



Life's Journey
Help Starts Here.

Each year, NASW provides a toolkit providing information about social work, media outreach tips and opportunities. Many people sent the Social Work Month letter to the editor to their local newspapers, while adding information about social work services in their specific community. Here are excerpts from that letter:

Social workers understand that the best elder care requires a broad view of social, environmental, psychological, economic and health care options. It is the ability to see the intersection of these elements that allow social workers to connect clients with the best resources for them – the best resources to help them along life's journeys.

March is National Social Work Month and the perfect opportunity to highlight the essential role that social workers play in working with all vulnerable populations, especially with older people. Social workers have the specialized knowledge and expertise to address issues facing older Americans, including providing individual and family counseling, psychosocial assessment and coordinating care.

This year's Social Work Month theme – Life's Journey: Help Starts Here – focuses on how social workers help all people at every stage of life, while promoting dignity for everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Some examples of information included about local communities:

“Pinehurst Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center provides a vital link between our older citizens and the health-related services they may need”

-The North Carolina Pilot

“As a social worker for Nashoba Valley Medical Center, I strive to assist patients and their families during their hospital stay.”

-The Littleton Independent (MA)

“In Napa County, social workers in the Comprehensive Services for Older Adults division of Health and Human Services serve hundreds of vulnerable older adults annually.”

-The Napa Valley Register

“As a professional social worker living and working in the Muskegon community for almost 30 years, I would like to take the opportunity to share about my profession.”

-The Muskegon Chronicle (MI)

NASW Chapters and other organizations celebrated Social Work Month in other ways:

- 26 NASW Chapters held their annual conference in March and honored their annual award winners
- The University of Kentucky College of Social Work hosted a Lobby Day, a symposium on social justice, a celebratory breakfast, and a career fair
- The University of Maryland School of Social Work, along with NASW Maryland Chapter, held a Lobby Day in the state capital to oppose budget cuts.
- Monmouth University in New Jersey presented a workshop about working with self-harming adolescents.
- The mayor of Bedford, VA and the governors of Idaho and South Carolina signed a proclamation recognizing March as Social Work Month.

PRESS RELEASES

NASW PRESS RELEASES (MARCH – APRIL 2006)

- National Association of Social Workers Celebrate National Social Work Month (March 1, 2006)
- Social Workers Call on Congress to Reject Destructive Insurance Bill (March 11, 2006)
- Social Workers Strive to Prevent Youth Violence (March 30, 2006)
- Social Work Welcomes New Editor-in-Chief (March 31, 2006)
- Social Workers Help Patients Cope with Pain Management at the End of Life (March 31, 2006)
- Social Workers Support National & Global Youth Service Day (April 21, 2006)

Individual Story Pitches/Press Requests

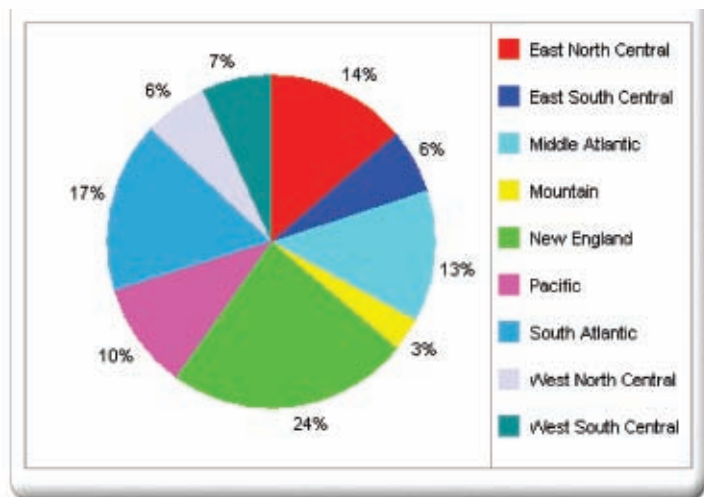
- **Lisa Yagoda**, senior policy associate for aging at NASW, was interviewed by *Home Port News*, a newsletter sent to 1.7 million Navy Federal Credit Union members. Lisa spoke about caring for aging parents from afar and

provided information about enlisting the help of a social worker.

- NASW Board of Directors member **Rebecca Cline** was interviewed by *Diane Magazine*, the flagship publication of Curves Gym, about the emotional implications of women who are in violent relationships.
- **Jim Finley**, senior government relations associate at NASW, was interviewed by the *Fort Wayne Business Weekly* about the Health Insurance Marketplace Modernization & Affordability Act, a piece of legislation that may reduce mental health benefits.
- **Yvette Colón**, from the American Pain Foundation, participated in the Hospice Foundation of America Annual Teleconference – “Pain Management at the End of Life.” More than 100,000 people from across the country participated in this annual teleconference.
- *Ongoing Magazine*, the publication of the University of Michigan School of Social Work, honored **Jorge Delva** on being named editor-in-chief of *Social Work*.

COVERAGE STATISTICS

March/April 2006



Total Articles for March/April 2006 – 663