

MEDIAWATCH 2009

January – March 2009

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CHARITY HELPS BREAK THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

QUARTERLY MEDIA ANALYSIS

Media coverage of the social work profession from Jan-March 2009 was largely dominated by issues related to the current economic crisis and the effect it is having on individuals and families nationwide. This trend was seen in coverage of all of core social work practice areas, but is most evident in the mental health area.

As has been seen in previous quarters, media coverage spanned a range of topics, including care giving, adoption and veteran's issues. National media coverage was not as prevalent this quarter. However, there were a good number of substantive local stories published throughout the country. The majority of social work coverage was in newspapers, with online and broadcast following.

Additionally, NASW celebrated Social Work Month in March, resulting in an increase of positive social work stories that month. We would like to thank all of NASW Chapters for their hard work in promoting the profession during Social Work Month. We will continue efforts to educate the public about the "purpose and possibility" of the social work profession.

AGING

ANALYSIS

Media coverage of topics related to aging and the elderly remained consistent with previous quarters, highlighting issues such as the increased need for caregiving services for the elderly and the strain this presents for the sandwich generation. Social workers continue to be a key resource for this population, and NASW is working hard to prepare the profession for the upcoming aging boom. NASW hosted its first Aging Practice Conference in March, titled "The Aging Boom: Is Your Clinical Practice Ready" to underscore the need for social work professionals to prepare for the impending growth of the elderly population. NASW will continue promoting these efforts to the media, and positioning social workers as aging experts for future coverage.



A NEEDED BOOST FOR SENIORS

MJ Brown • February 17, 2009

At 89 and 91 respectively, Nina and Barney Cohen are each sharp as a tack, but just need a little help managing their lives. Four years ago, the pair, who have no children, called on the Diablo Valley Foundation for the Aging, a Walnut-Creek based senior services agency, for general wellness and financial advice a couple of times per year. But in recent months, as Barney's health began to fail, the couple has required more urgent attention. Founded in 1975 by the late Dean Leshner, former publisher of the Contra Costa Times, and social worker **Katharine Grant**, the agency offers a wide range of services for about 230 seniors in Contra Costa County, including money management, social services, light housekeeping, food preparation, health care advocacy and transportation.

of social workers believe these women are not prepared for the cost of caring for an older relative. Further, most women reported they do not ask for help when they need it.

The Dallas Morning News **A NEED THAT RECESSION CAN'T STOP**

Bob Moos • February 17, 2009

The 65-plus population will almost double by 2030, increasing from 38 million today to 72 million. More than three-fourths of those older adults will suffer from at least one chronic condition that will require ongoing care. Scott Bennett decided to build a business on his belief that families would pay for someone to come in before a crisis and help them answer the health care, financial, legal and everyday questions that pop up when parents get sick. The idea resonated with **Rob Novick**, a college friend of Bennett's who had become a hospital social worker. Every day on his job, he met with families who hadn't thought about how they'd care for a parent at home. "I'd tell them that Mother couldn't live by herself after she was released from the hospital, and they'd be in shock. They hadn't planned," Novick said. "Scott's idea made perfect sense to me."

The Journal News (Hudson Valley, NY)

THE SANDWICH GENERATION IS SPREAD THIN

Jenny Higgons • March 29, 2009

A 2007 USA Today/Gallup Poll of baby boomers found that 41 percent of those with a living parent are helping to care for that parent - with finances, personal care or both - and 8 percent say their parents have moved in with them. Thirty-seven percent of those not caring for an aging parent say they expect eventually to do so, and about half are already worried about it." It's enormously stressful because the middle-agers are thinking and worrying about their parents," says **Rina Bellamy**, a geriatric social worker who is the director of My Second Home, an adult day program in Mount Kisco that is part of Family Services of Westchester.

The Bulletin (Bend, OR)

HANDLE WITH CARE

Alandra Johnson • March 27, 2009

Aging parents have long relied on their adult children to care for them. But something has shifted. Baby boomers are caring for their parents in staggering numbers. Adult children are often referred to as the "sandwich generation," because these individuals are sandwiched between their obligations to care for their children and to care for their aging parents. The stresses of such obligations were apparent in a 2008 **National Association of Social Workers** survey of sandwich-generation women. Some key findings include: 1). Twenty percent of women reported being very happy (compared with 34 percent of the general population). Many social workers attribute this to the women feeling overwhelmed with too many responsibilities. 2). Ninety-one percent of social workers believe that sandwich-generation women underestimate the toll of caring for an aging relative will take on their own health. 3). Seventy-four percent

AGING

More Aging Headlines:



DANCE TEACHER BENDS OVER BACKWARDS TO KEEP AGING STUDENTS MOVING

Feb. 2, 2009: Jane Shelton, former mental health social worker, teaches ballet to elderly students using her past social work experience as a guide.



SIGNS SHOW ITS TIME FOR UNSAFE DRIVER TO STOP DRIVING

Feb. 7, 2009: Doug Russell, LCSW, gives tips on signs that indicate it's time for an elderly loved one to stop driving.



WOMAN RESCUED FROM TRAILER GETS CARE

Feb. 18, 2009: An unnamed social worker from Adult Protective Services in Ohio explains how she rescued an elderly woman from her trailer with no heat in the winter.



VOLUNTEER NORMA CARRUTHERS OFFERS HAND TO OKLAHOMA SENIORS

Mar. 29, 2009: Volunteer services at an alternative care center in Oklahoma, named after social worker Lennie Marie Toliver, are highlighted.



NEW GERIATRIC CENTER TO HELP 'SILVER TSUNAMI' OF SENIORS

Mar. 31, 2009: Carl J. Beffa, clinical social worker at a newly opened geriatric care center in Williamsburg discusses services to the elderly.

MENTAL HEALTH

ANALYSIS

This quarter's coverage of mental health issues was largely characterized by the economic crisis and the impact it is having on individuals and families. Due to the recession, there is an increased need for mental health care as cases of stress and depression continue to rise; however, states are being forced to cut back on funding of these services for the same reason. Many of the articles this quarter feature social workers speaking out about the strain economic instability has caused and offering suggestions on how to cope during difficult times.



EXPERTS: TALK CAN HELP WITH SUICIDE PREVENTION

James Monteleone • February 1, 2009

Considering the escalated stress, New Mexico suicide prevention professionals say it's important to stay attentive to changing attitudes and behavior of friends and relatives. National and state crisis lines are available to talk anyone through thoughts of suicide, but increased community awareness of the symptoms of suicide can begin the conversation before someone gets to a stage of crisis, experts say. Independent Clinical Social Worker **David Johnson** said focusing on the fact that even the worst of situations get better over time can help prevent suicidal thoughts." The first (and) best place to start is opening up and talking to your friend," Johnson said. "As rotten as this situation seems to be at the moment, things do change."

The Boston Globe

HEALING, INTERRUPTED

Patricia Wen • February 1, 2009

They gathered once again in Room C10, a small windowless office where they had shared so much - **Chris Jepson**, the bearded state social worker, and Bruce Thiboult, the burly patient with bipolar disorder who had grown to depend on him. They had more than two years of history between them, time enough for Thiboult to confide some of his deepest secrets: the angels who came after his suicide attempt, the allure of crack and booze, his hatred of the mother who, he says, called him a 'fat pig.' But now, their weekly meetings had to end. As a result of the state's gaping budget deficit, Jepson received a layoff notice shortly before Christmas. The Goldfarb Behavioral Health Clinic in Jamaica Plain, which serves the neediest of the needy, would be shuttered by the end of January, he was told. "Closing with patients is difficult," he said during a lunch break a couple of weeks ago. "I've

never been someone who likes to say goodbye." Jepson has urged Thiboult to stay open to someone new, but he has faced resistance.

OVERCOMING FEAR

Josette Keelor • March 3, 2009



Dreams seem to bring out the worst fears in each of us, magnifying them into unrealistic proportions, from an army of invading spiders to a long fall from an airplane. Upon waking the dreamer is comforted in knowing the images cannot cause harm, no matter how frightening they might be. What would happen, though, if one could not escape the fear simply by waking but instead experiences that intense anxiety and dread all the time? "Fears are an awareness of wanting to avoid something that's perceived as dangerous," says **Donna van Horn**, a licensed clinical social worker with Valley Behavioral Health Associates in Woodstock.

Chicago Tribune

CHILD SUICIDES: RECENT SUICIDES PUT HIGHLIGHT ON PREVENTING TRAGEDIES

Lisa Black • March 30, 2009

Once considered taboo, childhood suicide and depression are being talked about with increasing candor, a social movement that became especially relevant last month when three Illinois children—a 10-year-old and two 11-year-olds—took their own lives in succession. Mental health programs such as Red Flags—geared to middle school students—are gaining popularity, with more than two dozen North Shore schools teaching the nationally used curriculum. Central School in Glencoe has taught the Red Flags lessons in 7th-grade classrooms since 2006, said **Jason Glassman**, a school social worker. Every year, as many as four students identify themselves as having anxiety or depression. "Those kids have gotten a lot of benefit out of it," he said, adding that the program has helped stir discussion.

MENTAL HEALTH

More Mental Health Headlines:



SOCIAL WORKER JOINS NETWORK (Yamhill Valley, OR)

Feb. 8, 2009: Laura Gillas, LCSW, announces her participation in local Give an Hour program.



CLASSROOMS ADDING 'M' FOR MEDITATION

Feb.9, 2009: School social worker Mary Reilly leads mindfulness curriculum at an Oakland school.



DEPRESSION COMMON IN WORKING MOTHERS

Feb. 11, 2009: Social worker Jane Smith discusses the stress involved when women work full- time, and highlights common causes of depression in working mothers.



SCHOOLS TRY TO HELP PARENTS, STUDENTS COPE WITH RECESSION

Feb. 11, 2009: Kellie Clegg, a school social worker, discusses her school's efforts to help counsel students and parents affected by the recession.



TIGHT BUDGET COULD AFFECT STATE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Feb. 20, 2009: Carole Lutness, psychiatric social worker for the Department of Mental Health in California explains the impact of the cuts in mental health services to make up for the State budget deficit.



YOUR EMOTIONAL STIMULUS PLAN

(Philadelphia, PA)

Feb. 22, 2009: Pamela Duhl, LCSW, gives advice on how to minimize stress during economic uncertainty.



MILITARY SUICIDES KEEP RISING

Feb. 22, 2009: Tom Olenjnik, a veterans social worker, discusses improvements in the military response to treating PTSD.



(South Bend, IN)

DEPRESSION CASES RISE AS ECONOMY FALLS

Mar. 4, 2009: Christine Stacey, LCSW, explains how stress from the recession is causing increased cases of depression and suicide.



VETERANS BAND TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Mar. 16, 2009: Social worker Donna Higgins explains her decision to accept help from a group of female veterans at a local veterans clinic.



EMOTIONAL SUFFERING GROWS AS ECONOMY STRUGGLES

Mar. 23, 2009: Sydney Fleischer discusses the increase in calls and appointments she's been receiving related to depression about the economy.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

ANALYSIS

Coverage of children and families was mixed this quarter, with articles highlighting child welfare challenges as well as the impact the economic crisis is having on communities. Though child welfare continues to be a challenging area for social work media coverage, we are seeing stories that highlight the positive impact social workers are having in the lives of children and families as well. This is a healthy balance of coverage, but still demonstrates the need for better public education about the diversity of the social work profession.



CHILDREN STRUGGLE WITH IDEA OF FAIRNESS

Evelyn Jackson • January 4, 2009

Why does the idea of fairness have such a hold on children? What is the best way for parents to handle the issue? And what can you expect as your children mature? **Bob Ericson**, a psychotherapist and clinical social worker based in South Dennis, is familiar with the “It’s not fair” charge. At ages 7 to 10, he says, “kids become so aware of rules that for some, fairness “can be like a caricature — overdrawn and an exaggeration. Some kids seize onto the word and the issues like a pit bull.” As children develop, their concept of fairness deepens. While they may still be concerned with winning a game or having a new pair of sneakers if their brother gets one, they are often capable of being analytical about equity and rules.



(Carbondale, IL)

SPENDING TIME WITH KIDS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Brent Stewart • January 27, 2009

When it comes down to it, amidst economic uncertainty and the stress it causes, when all is stripped away, one of the most important things we have left is family. Unfortunately, we find ourselves trapped in a vicious circle, especially when money is tight. Parents have to work to support their household, sometimes taking on extra responsibilities or even second jobs in order to make ends meet. However, that amounts to fewer hours in the day for those to whom you have the greatest responsibility, your kids. The reality is, it’s very difficult to spend time with your kids. So maybe you should make it a New Year’s resolution to do a better job. According to **David Matthews**, a licensed clinical social worker with Matthews and Assoc. in Herrin, it’s hard, but important.” It’s really something you have to strive toward,” Matthews said. “It’s worth the time.”

The Washington Post

A D.C. ADOPTION SUCCESS STORY

Courtland Milloy • February 18, 2009

Even as evidence of cruelty toward adopted children abounds — two D.C. kids killed in the past eight months, their adoptive parents charged or suspected in the homicides — [Kenneth] Johnson stands as towering proof of a love supreme. He has adopted eight children since 1983. “He’s just an amazing man with an incredible commitment to helping our youth,” said D.C. Council member **Tommy Wells** (D-Ward 6), a former social worker at the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency. “Mr. Johnson was a foster parent for one of the youths on my caseload, and he was fearless about coming to the agency and going straight to a social worker’s desk. He’d say, ‘My child needs so-and-so.’ And whether he wanted you to sign a document or just buy a box of his daughter’s Girl Scout cookies, he never let the government bureaucracy get in the way of providing good care for his children.”

TIME

KEEPING HOMELESS KIDS IN SCHOOL

Kathleen Kingsbury • March 12, 2009

Right now, nearly 1 in 10 children attending public school in Minneapolis is homeless. Teachers and school social workers at [Minneapolis Public Schools] are trained to recognize signs that a child may be between homes: hoarding food, wearing the same clothes every day, regularly falling asleep in class. Sometimes it’s just a matter of asking the right questions. When a second-grader at Longfellow Elementary School couldn’t stay awake during reading time, his teacher gently asked him why. “He told her that the rats and roaches were keeping him up,” says one of the school’s social workers, **Cheryl Flugaur-Levitt**. “We discovered he’d been sleeping on a relative’s floor, and he was scared to death about things crawling on him at night.” So she went to work on getting him at least a mattress to sleep on until his family could find a more permanent home.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

More Children & Families Headlines:



CHARITY HELPS BREAK CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

Jan. 24, 2009: Sandra Hernandez, LCSW, explains that educating children about anger management and building self esteem is critical to thwart violent behavior.

The News-Herald

TOUGH TIMES WEIGH ON KIDS, TOO (Willoughby, OH)

Jan. 30, 2009: Tina Brookes, LCSW, explains that children react to stress based on how the parent handles it, and encourages open communication during tough times.

The Washington Times

'CAN'T AFFORD' DIVORCE IN HARD TIMES, COUPLES STICK IT OUT

Feb. 6, 2009: Social worker and author Michele Weiner-Davis explains why some couples are deciding to stay together because divorce is not an option financially.



REDDING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO TEACH BABIES THEY'RE WONDERFUL (Redding, CA)

Feb. 26, 2009: Susan Thompson, LCSW, describes massage therapy she provides to infants and toddlers to encourage positive mental health.



NEBRASKA LAWMAKERS TACKLE SAFE-HAVEN PROBLEMS

Mar. 5, 2009: State Senator Gwen Howard, a retired social worker in Omaha, gives her position on a state bill that provides funding for children who were given up under the safe-haven law.



GRANDPARENTS THANK SOCIAL WORKER FOR SAVING TOT AFTER MOM'S DEATH

Mar. 11, 2009: Social worker Jade Tea is lauded for rescuing a child after finding his sick mother dead from kidney failure.



SWEEPING CHILD-CUSTODY CHANGES PROPOSED

Mar. 16, 2009: Sam Hickman, Executive Director, NASW-WV, explains the importance of considering the child's best interest when deciding custody cases.

HEALTH

ANALYSIS

Coverage of health issues this quarter, while not extensive, continues to reflect the variety of ways social workers are involved in this practice area. This quarter there were fewer articles than we've seen in past months, with more emphasis being placed on mental health than general health topics. This could be a result of the heightened public interest in mental health due to the recession.



AN EMERGENCY ROOM BUILT ESPECIALLY FOR SENIORS

Joseph Shapiro • February 19, 2009

Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Md., has set up an ER specifically for patients 65 and older. The ER opened last November and takes older patients, unless they're considered trauma patients. But the biggest change in the ER is something that's not immediately visible: It's the staffing. Doctors and nurses are trained in geriatrics. And there's a full-time social worker, a position not usually found in a regular emergency room. On a recent day, **Marcy Smith**, the geriatric social worker, helps a thin, distinguished-looking 91-year-old man. He arrived in a wheelchair, pushed by his son and his in-home caregiver. The man had a stroke last summer. Some of his words come out right, but many come out twisted. Smith introduces herself, kneels on the floor by his wheelchair and listens carefully. Smith's first job is to make sure he's physically comfortable, but also to make sure he gets the information he needs.



PATIENTS COPE AS SURGEON LOSES HIS OWN CANCER BATTLE

Lindy Washburn • February 26, 2009

The death of a physician who has helped thousands of patients is always a cause for sadness. It is much more so when that physician has led the patient's fight against a deadly illness. His bond with patients is forged in fire. And when that physician is killed by the very disease he helped his patients fend off, the layers of emotion grief, gratitude and fear are almost overwhelming. 'Your hearts have been re-broken,' **Toby Friedman**, a social worker, told the group of about 30 women. 'You've all experienced the trauma of being told you have cancer. Now your trauma has been reopened.' Davies was at the peak of his career, chairman of surgery at Hackensack University Medical Center and co-chief of its breast cancer services. His clinical work was accompanied by significant research.



PRECIOUS TIME FOR LITTLE STARS (Eugene, OR)

Randi Bjornstad • March 8, 2009

Even near the end of his too-short life, 3-year-old Davie still wanted to play. He would come out of his room, and his little legs would be hurting so much from the chemotherapy that he'd hang onto the door and say, 'Come on door, don't move - help me out,' his mother, Lynn Untz, recalls. Even in the last weeks of his life, he was always in motion. The reality is, kids may be terminally ill, but they still want to be active. They want to try to be normal. Too often, though, gravely ill children either end up spending their last days or weeks in a hospital bed or making frequent trips back and forth to specialized medical centers for treatment. But not those who - like Davie Untz - become part of Little Stars, an in-home hospice program for children developed five years ago at PeaceHealth's Sacred Heart Medical Center by registered nurse Nancy Diane Manelli-Brewer and medical social worker **Dora Parys**. "I also wanted to work with children, so this was very interesting," Parys said. "What's special is that it's not only pediatric care but it also can be end-of-life care, and that's something that many places won't do for kids. But it has a huge impact on them and their families, so we were willing to do it."



AN ER ALTERNATIVE

Carol Ann Campbell • March 9, 2009

Emergency room doctors noticed the difference. Many of their "super user" patients weren't coming around much anymore. These troubled people, struggling with chronic illness - and often with homelessness and addiction - routinely appeared at Camden hospitals, racking up huge bills and straining already crowded emergency rooms. Then last year a pilot program employing a nurse practitioner, a social worker, and a community health worker began closely following these top users - even tracking them down in

HEALTH

homeless shelters to help find them places to live. One day this winter, the team went to visit Paul, 52, a cocaine abuser and smoker who suffers from asthma, cardiac disease, and high blood pressure. In the last year, Paul, who asked that his last name not be used, had been to Cooper's ER four times and to Our Lady of Lourdes' ER once. He ended up in Cooper's cardiac unit for more than a week in early January. **Mae King**, the team's social worker, met Paul there and got him into a drug treatment center in a local rowhouse.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette®

EAT WHAT YOUR BODY NEEDS

Margaret Smykla • March 26, 2009

Make no mistake: Our bodies have never really asked for chocolate cake with butter cream icing. We just give it to them." Our bodies do not know what such food is and what to do with it," warns licensed clinical social worker **Elizabeth Babcock**. But with so many

social events oriented around food that is convenient and expected — rather than nutritious — it is no wonder overeating and, consequently being overweight and unhealthy, is such a widespread problem. Instead, one should use the body's hunger cues because the body has the feedback systems for perfect weight management for life, she said. Ms. Babcock, who has a master's degree in social work from the University of Pittsburgh, said understanding the role of societal factors in unhealthy eating is a first step in breaking the cycle. "I'm trying to help people be more conscious of what is influencing them so they can make choices rather than being controlled by factors they don't even understand," she said. In the past 20 to 30 years, she said, we have gone from a society in which jogging and running were popular pastimes to a sedentary society preoccupied with computers and television. And, the latter bombards us with advertising for unhealthy snacks, soft drinks and fast food.

More Health Headlines:

Dayton Daily News (Dayton, OH)

YOGA DAY CAN HELP YOU AND HELP A GOOD CAUSE

Jan. 22, 2009: **Susan Joseph**, a former social worker and yoga teacher for 12 years, explains how yoga helps the body and immune system.

The Hartford Courant.

HOSPITAL WORKER GETS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Feb. 15, 2009: **Alan Maranaccio**, a hospital social worker in Connecticut is recognized for his career achievements.

THE Business Journal SERVING GREATER MILWAUKEE

SOCIAL WORKER INVENTS DEVICE TO ACCESS MEDICAL RECORDS

Jan. 26, 2009: **Gerald Theis**, a Milwaukee social worker invents a device that allows EMT's to access patient medical records more quickly.

TRENDS IN SOCIAL WORK COVERAGE

NASW celebrated National Professional Social Work Month in March. Our theme, “Social Work: Purpose & Possibility” underscores the great sense of purpose and the countless possibilities found in the social work profession. This section provides a snapshot of media coverage during Social Work Month.

HRMC HONORS SOCIAL WORKERS (North Carolina)

Haywood County News • February 27, 2009

Social workers are society’s safety net, providing vital resources and support to those who need it most. They help children in schools reach their educational goals, provide treatment at mental health facilities and play many other fundamental roles. They also play a vital role at Haywood Regional Medical Center. The theme of this year’s **National Social Work Month** — Social Work: Purpose and Possibility —highlights the special characteristics of individuals who choose social work as a profession. Social workers are purpose-driven, compassionate individuals who work across a range of areas to help those most vulnerable.

AN ADVOCATE IN TIMES OF NEED (Petaluma, CA)

Petaluma 360.com • Terry Hankins • March 4, 2009

Knowledgeable advocates for those in distress, social workers are committed to helping direct individuals and families toward the services and agencies that can provide what they need. It’s a rewarding career that provides a great service to the community, and one being honored nationally in March as Social Work Month. The City Council issued a proclamation on March 2 officially honoring March as Social Work Month in Petaluma. “Sponsored by the **National Association of Social Workers**, this is an opportunity to highlight the important and varied roles that social workers play in our community as well as to educate our neighbors about avenues for help with life challenges,” said social worker and Petaluma resident **Marjorie Helm**.

SOCIAL WORKERS’ PROFESSION BRINGS OTHER PEOPLE HOPE

(Cumberland, MD)

Cumberland Times-News • Joy Reckley, LCSW • March 9, 2009

Social work is a practical profession aimed at helping people address their problems and matching them with the resources they need to lead healthy and productive lives. The original mission of social work had much to do with championing the rights of society’s most vulnerable members, from children to the homeless to the physically and mentally challenged. That mission

remains the same over 100 years later. **NASW** works to shape legislation and public policy that protects and strengthens the social work profession, promotes health, welfare, and education in communities, and strengthens opportunities and social supports for individuals, families, and communities. It also works to protect the public and ensure high quality social work services in communities. March is **National Social Work Month** and this year’s theme is “Purpose and Possibility.” Social work is a profession of hope. Please take a moment to recognize a social worker and the individuals, families, and communities with which we work and recognize the many possibilities that are abundant in our community.

SOCIAL SAFETY NETS AND COMMUNITY COMPASSION

(Bell Gardens, CA)

Bell Garden Sun • Charlene Dimas-Peinado • March 19, 2009

March is the one time each year when America’s social workers are lauded and celebrated for their contributions to the social fabric of our communities - and rightly so. Nearly 1 million people across the nation are licensed social workers serving mental health, welfare and family, health, and aging needs. You will find these highly skilled and dedicated folks working in hospitals, police departments, mental health clinics and corporations. On average a social worker holds a master’s level degree and is required to have a minimum of supervised hours to practice in a given field, as well as licensure by the Board of Behavioral Sciences. There is an ever-growing need for social workers with the demand spreading to include adoption and hospice care.

SOCIAL WORKERS GET SUPPORT (North Carolina)

The Star • Cassie Tarpley • March 21, 2009

Who doctors the doctor? Who nurses the nurse? Who counsels, comforts and supports the social worker? At the 14th annual Social Worker Luncheon in Cleveland County, the focus was all on social work professionals. More than 100 were treated to lunch, door prizes and a “mental massage” from guest speaker **Dr. Brent Cagle**, who has walked in their shoes and now teaches

the profession. In her welcome, **Patti Ellis McMurry** of Hospice said celebrating during **National Social Work Month** is important because local workers are strengthening lives through solutions. Going into fractured family situations, helping the helpless, dealing with death, social work cases can be like jigsaw puzzles, McMurry said.” It takes time, energy and focus to bring the pieces together correctly,” she said.

BONDS ENJOYS JOB AT HOSPICE (Scottsboro, AL)

The Daily Sentinel • Ken Bonner • March 23, 2009

Carol Bonds is a licensed graduate social worker (LGSW) with New Beacon Hospice. Until recently, Bonds had worked in traditional social work settings. She has a master’s degree with a concentration in mental health.” Working in a rural hospice setting as a social worker has been the most rewarding position I have undertaken,” said Bonds. March is **National Social Workers Month**. Bonds, and others like her in many different jobs, are proud of the contributions social workers make to society. “The reason I chose social work as a career was to empower people of adversity so that they could make a change. As a rural hospice social worker I have the opportunity to empower patients and their families to realize they have the chance to control their end-of-life wishes,” Bonds said. “It is a humbling experience, which helps me in keeping my priorities in order.”

SOCIAL WORKERS PLAY CRITICAL ROLE (Ft. Meyers, FL)

News-Press • March 24, 2009

The month of March is designated as National Professional Social Work Month. Many people call themselves “social workers,” but only some have completed education and training to earn the title of social worker. Each year, the **National Association of Social Workers** (NASW) celebrates the hard work and dedication of professional social workers throughout the country. This year’s theme focuses on purpose and

possibility. The theme has a dual goal to bring more passionate professionals into the field of social work and to acknowledge the work of professional social workers who have “the unique training and education to see the purpose and possibility in the lives of those they serve.” Professional social workers impact the lives of older adults in our community every day. They strive to help older persons achieve the goal of aging gracefully through their work in human services organizations, hospice, and hospital settings. The social worker is the key professional who helps the family make the transition from hospital to nursing home placement. The social worker is often the one who counsels the family on seeking hospice care at the right time for end of life care.

SOCIAL WORKER: A THANKLESS JOB, BUT A PURPOSEFUL LIFE

(Durham, North Carolina)

The Durham News • March 30, 2009

In clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, social service agencies, hospice facilities, schools, homeless shelters and countless other settings; from before birth to death, social workers find themselves in the business of helping people in need and addressing social problems. Why? Simply stated, social workers find a purpose-filled life to be of paramount importance. In fact, a life given in service to others is a fundamental core value of the social work profession. As part of this social challenge, social workers seek to remedy injustices through advocacy, community organization and political change. **March is National Social Work Month**. A critical part of our society, it celebrates the many tireless social workers who use their trained talents to help others create better lives for themselves and their families. From supporting a young child threatened with illness to family members facing a social problem to assisting a senior to connect with new friends; spanning the entire life spectrum, social workers help others overcome barriers that keep them from leading positive and productive lives.

NASW PRESS RELEASES THIS QUARTER

- *U.S. Senator Mikulski Reintroduces Social Work Reinvestment Act to Honor Dr. Dorothy I. Height (3/27/09)*
- *NASW Applauds Passage of Social Work Month and World Social Work Day Resolution (3/19/09)*
- *NASW Hosts Annual Practice Conference on Aging in Las Vegas (3/12/09)*
- *Social Work Profession Recruits New Students During National Social Work Month (3/12/09)*
- *NASW Promotes National Healthcare Decisions Day 2009 (2/5/09)*
- *111th Congress Urged to Support Social Work Reinvestment (2/4/09)*
- *Social Workers Applaud Passing of Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in Congress (1/28/09)*
- *Society for Social Work and Research Hosts 13th Annual Conference in New Orleans (1/16/09)*
- *NASW Seeks Privacy Protections for Personal Health Records (1/4/09)*

QUARTERLY MEDIA TIPS

Writing Effective Letters to the Editor

Each paper has specific rules, so remember to check before you submit. In general, follow these basic guidelines.

Make it relevant. Newspapers usually only publish letters that respond to recent articles, op-eds, or editorials. Some papers do and others do not print responses to other published letters. If you wish to introduce a new topic to the paper, a letter is not appropriate. Instead, submit an op-ed (opinion editorial) piece to the editorial review board. Op-eds are normally around 750 words, but are notoriously harder to place.

Make it timely. The sooner the better: the first letters received on a topic are read first and are more likely to be selected. Cite the article or opinion piece to which you are responding, including the date.

Address the editors. Write as if you're talking to the editor of the newspaper - not to readers, not to elected officials, not to the world at large.

Stay on point. One topic per letter is best. And do not feel that you have to cover all aspects of that in a few short sentences. Rather, concentrate on a few powerful points that show the need for reform. Bring in personal experiences when appropriate and if you are comfortable doing so.

Keep it short. There is a rough limit of 250 words for letters. Letters that can make their point in 100 words or less have a better-than-average chance of getting printed. Longer letters are less likely to be published and, if selected, will almost definitely be edited. Don't let the letters editor remove or dilute your most important points.

Avoid personal attacks. Jumping on the ideas expressed by others can make for a lively letter; attacking the individuals themselves is uncivil behavior.

Submitting a Letter

Proofread and spell check. Typos can undermine your credibility. It is always a good idea to have a friend read it over to double-check that everything looks good.

Use your real name. Newspapers do not accept anonymous letters. If your letter concerns your personal experiences, however, some papers will print it under a pseudonym.

Include contact information. Provide a phone number for confirmation and a regular mailing address, even if you are submitting by email. Newspapers need this information for internal use to confirm that you are the person who submitted the letter. They will usually print the name of your town, but not your street address or phone number.

Submit it online. Most papers now allow you to submit your letter through their online submission form. You can find submission instructions in the paper or on its Web site.

Post a comment. Once your letter to the editor is published, remember to check the newspaper's Web site for reader's comments or other feedback from your article. This is an opportunity to continue the dialogue about your topic. If necessary, you may post your own comments as well.

Be email savvy. If you submit by email, paste your letter into the text of the email. Do not send attachments. Many papers will not even open an email with an attachment.

- Tips for advocates from the Treatment Advocacy Center