University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange

Stimulus Alumni Newsletter

Social Work Office of Research & Public Service (SWORPS)

12-1-1999

Stimulus, Fall/Winter 1999

UT College of Social Work

Follow this and additional works at: http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_socstim

Recommended Citation
Stimulus, Fall/Winter 1999. Fall/Winter 1999. (1999). Trace.
http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_socstim/42

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Social Work Office of Research & Public Service (SWORPS) at Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Stimulus Alumni Newsletter by an authorized administrator of Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact trace@utk.edu.

Fall/Winter 1999

Stimulus

The University of Tennessee College of Social Work

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, disability or veteran status in provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. This policy extends to both employment by and admission to the University. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex or disability in the education programs and activities pursuant to the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Inquiries and charges of violation concerning Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) or any of the other above-referenced policies should be directed to the Office of Diversity Resources & Educational Services (DRES), 1818 Lake Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37996-3560, telephone (423) 974-2498 (TTY available). Requests for accommodation of a disability should be directed to the ADA Coordinator at the Office of Human Resources Management, 600 Henley Street, Knoxville, TN 37996-4125. The Chancellor of the University of Tennessee and the University Computing Center are acknowledged for providing central and/or distributed computing facilities and services.

Contents

Special Report–

Children's Mental Health Services Research Center.....1

Letter from the Dean.....3

Feature—Mission to India.....4

Spring CE Workshops.....5

Photo Gallery.....6

Rody Cohen Scholarship.....7

Faculty and Staff News.....8

Niya Butts Honored.....9

CSW Study on the Homeless.....10

Juvenile Court Award.....11

Children's Research Center Celebrates a Decade of Success

Special Report

by Jim Hollifield

Finding funds for most research projects is an obstacle in itself, a fact to which any researcher can attest. For Dr. Cynthia Rocha, assistant professor in the University of Tennessee College of Social Work, time, too, was of the essence in getting her research project funded.

Her idea began when she heard about a factory closing. She formulated a research project that would follow a group of dislocated workers over a 2-year period to see what kinds of jobs they might find in a labor market that was shifting away from manufacturing.

Additionally, she wanted to study what kind of retraining the displaced workers would get and how it might help them in the job market, how much financial adversity they would face, and how all this would affect their children's emotional well-being and their family relationships. Rocha faced a big dilemma, however, because she heard about the plant closing only 6 weeks before the grant proposal was due. She turned to the Children's Mental Health Services Research Center at Knoxville for assistance.

For more information about the Children's Mental Health Services Research Center, visit the Center's website at http://social33.csw.utk.edu/

"The Center was so helpful," Rocha remembers. "Everyone came together to help me with my grant. I had people reading versions of the grant, helping me write introductory paragraphs, looking over my data-analysis section, helping me type up reference lists, and putting my budget in correct format, all at the same time!

"We were down to the wire, and the *whole* center came in on a Saturday morning and helped me get it into the FedEx that day," she recalls, adding, "This is really what the Center is all about, and without their support, I couldn't have gotten that grant funded on the first shot."

Obtaining funds for quality research is never easy and is often complicated, says Denny Dukes, the associate director of the Center. He points out that the Center's focus fosters the evolutionary stages in the research process, from putting together a budget to building a quality research proposal and getting it submitted through the proper channels, very similar to the process Dr. Rocha encountered on her proposal to track the displaced factory workers.

"If somebody has a desire to do the research, having the expertise that the Center brings makes it easier," Dukes says.

The Center recently assisted two junior UTK College of

continued on page 2

An Ounce of Prevention

In Tennessee alone, some 60,000 children annually are referred to juvenile and family courts for

Charles Glisson, Center Director

neglect, abuse, truancy, running away, and delinquent behavior. Nationwide, almost one million children are in the custody of state departments of child welfare, juvenile corrections, and mental health.

As the only UTK research facility that focuses exclusively on children and families at risk, one of the major objectives of the Children's Research Center is to support research that expands empirical knowledge about children at risk rather than merely reporting on the problems, says Center director Charles Glisson.

A major goal is to broaden the scope of research to encompass a proactive approach, adds Denny Dukes, the Center's associate director.

Of particular concern are children in Tennessee who face the type of chronic mental health and behavioral problems that will continue into adulthood and result in rising personal, economic, and societal costs.

Children's Research Center (continued from page 1)

Social Work faculty members in getting their research funded. A third proposal is in the works, and a fourth is awaiting a decision. The process is comparable to preparing a rocket for launch, Dukes says.

Obtaining research support from the federal government is an arduous and lengthy process, but this continues to be a primary source of funding. "If there are donors out there who are interested in research on children, we'd be happy to have them help support what we're doing, because the federal money doesn't pay for everything that we can do," says Dukes.

The Center operates with a small core staff that provides the expertise to prepare budgets, put solid projects together, and implement funded proposals. An interdisciplinary approach, including the involvement of faculty members outside the College of Social Work, fosters teamwork and promotes the Center's vision of important research with a national impact.

Dukes notes that several research projects are underway with the involvement of faculty at other universities, "so the external family of researchers is now a lot larger than when we started." That broad focus contributes much to the Center's success, according to CSW Dean Karen Sowers.

"Given the great complexity of social problems affecting families today, the Center fosters and promotes interdisciplinary and collaborative research among top scholars across a variety of disciplines and universities," Sowers says.

Dukes agrees with that assessment, and adds, "We are social work driven, but we have always been very dedicated to interdisciplinary work."

In fact, the Center is currently working with faculty from the UTK colleges of social work, human ecology, arts and sciences, and business, and with faculty from medicine, statistics, and economics in institutions nationwide.

When faculty members at UTK become interested, the educational benefits pay additional rewards, according to Sowers. "[The Center] provides an excellent training ground for graduate students interested in cross-departmental research on children and families at risk," she notes.

Graduate students from social work, law, psychology, and management have held assistantships in the Center. This past year, grants have been obtained on a variety of research fronts, including the topics of child neglect, the working poor, and delinquent youths.

Knowledge gleaned from a dedicated team of Center staff, CSW faculty, and graduate students and researchers outside the Center and university will continue to drive the Center's collective body of work into the next millennium, says Dukes.

"In terms of UT, we're the only research center that addresses children at risk, and that's an area with potentially far-reaching implications," he says.

"As we enter the new millennium and our society becomes more and more complex, the demands on both children and parents will continue to increase," says Dr. Glisson.

"There are few research topics more important to our well-being and quality of life than ensuring the mental health and happiness of our children," adds Glisson. "We intend for the Children's Mental Health Services Research Center to help Tennessee meet that challenge into the next century."

***Jim Hollifield is an editorial assistant on the staff of* Stimulus.**

Letter from the Dean

Last year was an exciting one for UT and for the College of Social Work, and this year has already begun with much promise. Winning a national championship helped bring even greater visibility to the university, as evidenced by a dramatic increase in applications from prospective students. And, as the university is growing stronger, so too is the College of Social Work.

Last year ended on a high note for us, with the College's Children's Mental Health Services Research Center achiving an all-time record in external funding. Our Social Work Office of Research and Public Service, which under the direction of Paul Campbell serves Tennessee and the southeast region by providing consultation, research, evaluation, and public service, also had a stellar year. In fiscal '99, SWORPS will top $6 million in external funds alone.

Immersed in cutting-edge research, our faculty brings the latest technology and practice advances to prepare our new professionals for the challenges they will face after graduation and in the future.

As the academic year began, the College was blessed with the establishment of two new scholarships: the Rody Cohen Scholarship Fund (see story on p. 7) and the Judge Garrett Scholarship, funded by the Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association (see p. 11). As state funding for higher education continues to decline and tuition continues to increase, gifts such as these are critically important in providing support for students, and the College is extremely grateful for these gifts.

This year, the College of Social Work welcomed its new Board of Visitors. These dedicated and committed alumni and friends of the College will help us enhance our visibility, establish lasting community relations, and help set development directions. We launched this new endeavor during Homecoming . . . a most appropriate time, for this is when we honor all of you—our valued alumni and friends.

Laura M. Sowers

The UT College of Social Work welcomed its new Board of Visitors during Homecoming. Members of the group are David Guth, Betsy Child, Dona Diftler, Betty Robinson, Rody Cohen, Rebecca Henderson, Sally Obermeier, Julia Hardin, and Deborah Wolkhamer (l. to r., standing), and Dr. John Turner (seated to the right of Dean Sowers). Not pictured are Mary Catherine Willard and Elliott Moore.

CSW Children's Research Center Funding Approaches $10 Million

From its early origins in 1989 and its designation as a National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Research Center in 1995, the UT Children's Research Center's outstanding reputation has contributed to its fast-track success in the social work environment.

"The Center engages in cutting-edge research on children and families at risk," notes Dean Sowers.

According to the Dean, Center director Charles Glisson's leadership and vision explain much of its success. "[He is] one of the top researchers and scholars in the country," she observes.

For a number of years, Dr. Glisson has focused on children referred to Tennessee's juvenile and family courts because of abuse, neglect, or delinquency. He is currently directing research with the Department of Children's Services to explore effective ways to improve services to children.

In May 1998, the Center was reapproved as an official UTK research center. To date, the Center has been awarded almost $10 million in research grants from NIMH, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the Health Resources and Services Administration, and currently approved research funding from NIMH continues through the year 2004.

CSW Professors Extend Services to the Blind in India

Approximately 22 million people in rural India have cataracts, and according to the World Health Organization, between 9 and 12 million of those people are legally blind. The quality of life for these indigent villagers is severely impacted by this national crisis. What's more, a blind family member dramatically affects a family's ability to provide for itself. Unfortunately, the cost of eye care is beyond the reach of many Indian people, who live in conditions of extreme poverty and geographic isolation.

With the support of the University of Tennessee College of Social Work, Dr. David Patterson, associate professor of Social Work, spent four weeks during February and March of 1999 addressing India's cataract problem as the director of clinical statistics for the Netraprakash 1999 Eye Camp. While there, he managed an international team of volunteers in the collection, analysis, and reporting of medical and demographic information during each phase of the eye camp. This data provided information for the camp's daily operation. In addition, the data will serve as a valuable resource for research to measure the success of the eye camp and in planning future rural health services.

Dr. Patterson was accompanied to India by his family, who also served as volunteers at the Eye Camp. His wife, Melanie McGhee, a clinical social worker in private practice in Maryville and an adjunct faculty member in the UT College of Social Work and at Maryville College, served as a writer for the camp, collecting stories from patients and camp volunteers. Their daughters, Kaitlyn and Hannah, ages 12 and 11, provided water to patients, assisted the nursing staff, and helped provide food services for other volunteers.

Melanie McGhee, LCSW (far right, wearing hat), met regularly with the people who underwent cataract surgery at the Netraprakash Eye Camp. As the camp's official writer, she reported how the surgery affected patients' quality of life as a result of the improvements they experienced in eyesight.

The Netraprakash Eye Camp was sponsored by an international philanthropic organization called the PRASAD Project. *Prasad* is a Sanskrit word meaning "a gift that carries blessings." More than 700 volunteers from 22 countries participated in Netraprakash '99. They transformed a dry rice paddy into a tent city and a tractor showroom into a surgical theater. Complete with state-of-the art technology and highly skilled surgeons, the operating theater became a hive of activity, as 1,190 villagers from this rural district of India received free, sight-restoring surgery.

In addition to his other duties, Dr. Patterson served as a consultant to the Indian medical staff in designing a study to measure changes in the quality of life of the Eye Camp patients before their surgery and for 60 days after surgery. It is clear that former surgery patients have experienced dramatic improvements in their vision, but the

Dr. David Patterson (center, with identification tag) served as the director of clinical statistics for the Netraprakash 1999 Eye Camp in rural India.

degree to which this has improved quality of life has not previously been studied. Dr. Patterson returned to India in early May to direct data collection and analysis in a Follow-up Eye Camp, which was designed to measure postoperative changes in patients' lives. Preliminary examination of the data suggests that most patients have experienced improvements in several areas, including self-care, mobility, social relationships, and psychological functioning.

During the Follow-up Camp, each of the surgery patients will have his or her vision tested and will be given prescription glasses if necessary. In addition, Yag laser surgeries will be performed on people who previously had cataract surgery. Yag laser surgery removes any scarring left behind the implanted lens. This scarring can cause a patient's vision to be unclear. This technology was first used at an eye camp during Netraprakash 1996.

In her interviews with patients following the Eye Camp, Ms. McGhee heard many positive reports from people who recently regained the precious gift of sight. One elderly woman shared, "I have lived in darkness and fear. Now I am no longer afraid. I can even leave my hut by myself."

Another patient, a young boy who had undergone successful surgery, stated that he has decided to become a doctor. His goal is to help other blind children so that they can "play and study," as he now can.

One middle-aged man, Nana, who had been blind for three years because of cataracts, was accompanied to a rural eye camp by his wife, Anandi. Despite owning his own rice field, he had not been able to work the field due to his blindness. But with his sight now restored, Nana expressed that he is eager to work in his field to once again provide for himself and his wife.

When asked what he was looking forward to seeing, Nana smiled and said, "I am eager to see the face of my beautiful wife." His own face softened as he continued, "I am looking forward to seeing the green of my rice fields, the moon and the stars, and the smiles on my grandchildren's faces."

Don't Miss These Upcoming Workshops!

Multicultural Women's Gathering

Presenters: Lynne Forrest and Gloria E. Pogue

In this workshop, interracial facilitators will take an honest look at the part each of us plays in reinforcing racism in our personal environments. We will also look at how society and culture have historically dealt with racism and will explore new ways of healing racial conflicts.

Gallatin
Saturday, February 19, 2000

Tai Chi as a Therapeutic Modality for Mental Health Professionals and Their Clients

Presenters: Steve Brown, LCSW; Larry Brown, MS, CTRS, CAS; and Gene Hays, PhD

Tai Chi Chuan is an ancient Chinese practice that seeks to harmonize the mind and body in the context of a meditative movement discipline. This workshop will teach participants how to use basic Tai Chi as a way of reducing stress and improving impulse control.

Johnson City
Friday, March 3, 2000

Renew Your Spirit . . . Create Your Own Spirit Doll

Presenter: Joyce Wool Rosenfeld, MA

This experiential workshop delves into the power of metaphor and offers an opportunity for providers who care for the spirit of their clients and patients to renew their own spirits. Participants will create their own symbolic "Spirit Dolls," which possess attributes of hope and healing. These dolls can then provide a reminder of how to be refreshed and renewed in a daily work environment.

Knoxville
Friday, March 17, 2000

For more information about these and other workshops, call 423-974-6016 or view our on-line catalog by clicking on "Professional Continuing Education" at http://sworps.utk.edu

Photo Gallery

UTCSW

Three BSSW students strike a pose before being inducted into the Phi Alpha Epsilon Iota Honor Society. (Left to right are Dianne Taylor, Lorien Anderson, and Jamie Scott.)

Camera shy? Not this group of MSSW students, who served as marshals for the Spring 1999 hooding ceremony. On the back row are Jennifer Jones, LaKishia Bussell, Heather McCurry, Linda Sparks, Cathy Chambers, and UT CSW Program Specialist Linda Broyles (l. to r.). In the center is Anna Valenti, and up front is Bev Gibson.

Members of the MSSW Social Work Organization worked with Habitat for Humanity to help build a home for a low-income family.

Recent social work graduate Jessie Lewis (MSSW '99) celebrates with her grandson, Trini.

Alumna Joyce Pollard (MSSW '94) shares a happy moment with Professor Roger Nooe after the Spring 1999 hooding ceremony.

New Scholarship Fund Established as a Fitting Tribute to UT CSW Alumna Rody Cohen (MSSW '71)

University of Tennessee Law Professor Dr. Neil Cohen chose a very special way of honoring his wife, Rody, on the occasion of their 30th wedding anniversary. Dr. Cohen created the Rody Cohen Scholarship as a tribute to this 1971 graduate of the College of Social Work's Nashville program.

"Dr. Cohen wanted to give her a unique and personal gift," says Dr. Donna Bletner, director of development for the College of Social Work.

"This is a very fitting gift for her, because what she cares about most are building communities, decreasing poverty, and encouraging diversity," adds Bletner.

Cohen has worked with Child and Family Services in the Knoxville region since 1980. She is now the program coordinator for that agency's program Kids on the Block program, which provides information about prevention of child abuse, AIDS awareness, prevention of community violence, and understanding of disabilites to school-age children in the public school system.

These are the areas of interest preferred for recipients of the new scholarships, according to Bletner. In addition, the endowment will fund scholarships for CSW junior or senior students who want to focus on bringing about cultural change.

Neil and Rody Cohen met with the Dean at a luncheon in honor of their contribution to the CSW.

"I can think of no better role model for the scholarship recipients than Rody Cohen," says Dr. Karen Sowers, Dean of the College of Social Work.

"Throughout the years as a professional social worker, she has been strongly committed to improving the community we live in through the development of community coalitions to help the impoverished and oppressed," Sowers explains.

"The College is blessed to have such alumni and friends of the College, who are so committed to helping the new generation of professionals," Sowers adds.

The endowment is fully funded and is already beginning to accrue interest. It will be available to award a scholarship in 2000.

Charitable Trusts

Does someone you know (a client, a friend, or YOU) have highly appreciated stocks or property?

Will that someone have a capital gains tax problem when the stock or property is sold?

Does that person want a source of lifetime income for both spouses? Then a charitable trust may be the way to go.

For example, a $100,000 piece of property with a basis of $10,000 will result in a capital-gains tax of as much as $25,200. By giving the property to UT, the donor can avoid the capital gains tax, can take a present-value charitable deduction, and can establish a trust that will pay between 5 percent and 8 percent per year for the lifetimes of both husband and wife.

There are obvious advantages in estate planning gained by removing the asset from the estate. The value of that asset can be replaced for children's/grandchildren's inheritance with a second-to-die life insurance policy paid through the tax savings and/or income from the trust.

Mike Hitchcock and Woody Henderson in the UT Office of Planned Giving stand ready to assist you or your accountant or tax attorney (with no obligations) to look at this alternative in estate planning. Their expertise is a valuable resource, and it is free of charge. Call them at 423-974-2155 or fax information for analysis to 423-974-2663.

Faculty and Staff News

Theora Evans is a new Assistant Professor at the UT College of Social Work in Memphis. Her general areas of interest include social welfare history and adolescent health care, for which she has developed a national reputation for her work.

In 1996, she received her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota's School of Social Work, where her doctoral dissertation focused on protective mechanisms for school-aged children with chronic physical conditions.

Evans received her MSW from Chicago's Loyola University School of Social Work in 1978 and a Master of Public Health from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1987. Before coming to UT, she directed the adolescent health fellowship program at the University of Minnesota's Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health and School of Social Work, in addition to teaching as an assistant professor, coordinating interdisciplinary training, and researching adolescent health issues.

From 1988 until 1996, Evans was a clinical assistant professor and director of practicum and core faculty at the University of Iowa's College of Social Work and the Iowa Geriatric Education Center. Her professional career also includes working as the executive director of the Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition and as a faculty member/visiting lecturer in Northeastern Illinois State University's Social Work Program.

Catherine N. Dulmus is the newest faculty member at the College of Social Work's Knoxville campus. Prior to coming to UT, she was an assistant professor at East Carolina University's School of Social Work in Greenville, North Carolina. She also taught as an adjunct faculty member at Jamestown Community College in Olean, New York, and as a research and teaching assistant at SUNY in Buffalo, New York. Her professional experience includes working as a social work consultant at St. Bonaventure University in St. Bonaventure, New York, where she assisted the university in establishing BSW and MSW programs that conformed to continuing social work education specifications.

In addition, her career elsewhere in New York has included working as a mental health and nursing home consultant, as the director of a mental health day program, as a mental health therapist, a school social worker, a medical/psychiatric social worker, and as the Community Outreach Director for the Salvation Army in Jamestown, New York.

Her areas of research and scholarly interests include child mental health, child-abuse prevention, chronic mental illness, and violence.

Dulmus received her Ph.D. in 1998 from State University of New York at Buffalo and earned her MSW there in 1991.

In New York, she served on several boards and task force organizations dedicated to issues such as homelessness, AIDS, and domestic violence. In 1990, she was named the NASW Western Division Student Social Worker of the Year.

Colleen M. Galambos has joined the UT College of Social Work's Nashville location. Prior to coming to the University of Tennessee, she was chairperson of the Department of Social Work at Western Maryland College, where she also spearheaded the development of an interdisciplinary gerontology minor, served as director of field instruction, and previously taught as an assistant professor in the Social Work Program.

Her career also includes working as an adjunct instructor in the MSW program at Catholic University of America National School of Social Service in Washington, D.C., and as an adjunct instructor at the University of Maryland Baltimore County's Social Work Department. She was also a field instructor at the University of Maryland for both graduate and undergraduate social work students as well as a field instructor in Western Maryland College's Social Work Program.

Galambos earned her DSW in 1995 from Washington, D.C.'s Catholic University of America National School of Social Service and her MSW in 1981 from the University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work and Community Planning.

Her research interests include the effectiveness of caregivers' support groups, gender issues in the use of power and influence, the influence of community activism on the development of female college students, and the effects of educational programs on beliefs and attitudes about affordable housing and the poor.

Galambos has served in a number of capacities through national associations, and her professional practice experience includes extensive consultative, administrative, and clinical work in Maryland.

Samuel McMaster has joined the Nashville campus faculty. He is a Ph.D. candidate in Social Welfare at Cleveland, Ohio's Case Western Reserve University, where he also received his Master of Science in Social Administration (MSSA) in 1994, with a concentration in alcohol abuse and other forms of drug abuse.

As a licensed independent social worker and certified chemical dependent counselor in Ohio, McMaster spent a year teaching as an adjunct faculty member at The Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University. He also taught at Cleveland State University's Department of Social Work.

McMaster's research experience includes managing the Pilot Managed Care Project, a two-year longitudinal study of an innovative program for recently de-institutionalized long-term residents of a psychiatric hospital. Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health Research Institute at Case Western Reserve University was the foundation for this area of research. McMaster's additional research experience includes work on projects at Case Western University's Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change, the Department of Family Medicine in the School of Medicine, and the Center for Practice Innovations.

His clinical experience includes consultant work for the Xchange Point, a Cleveland, Ohio–based AIDS service agency that serves injection drug users. He also did consultant work for the Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland and consulted with numerous other health and behavior treatment programs in the Ohio area, many of which dealt with chemical dependency among adults and youth.

Lady Vol Niya Butts Scores Points in Social Work

University of Tennessee Lady Vol Niya Butts is no stranger to surmounting obstacles; after all, the 6′ 0″ senior forward is a member of a legendary NCAA Championship team.

Off the court, however, Niya's focus is meeting the real-life, everyday challenges faced by social workers. She is scheduled to receive the BSSW degree in Spring, 2000, with a minor in psychology.

Her field placement in her junior year was at the Katie Miller Group Home in Knoxville. This year Niya is placed with the Runaway Shelter, where she has already made a positive impression. Her field instructor describes her as an intern who has "a firm commitment to professional values and ethical principles."

When asked about his impressions, Frank Spicuzza, chairperson of the BSSW program, adds, "One word comes to mind—resilience. She has to struggle with pain while playing basketball, but she endures and moves forward. Niya does not give up; she accepts adversity and goes on."

Niya's hero is Michael Jordan, and like him, she hopes to eventually be a role model for young people. Born in Americus, Georgia, she is the daughter of Lawrence Marshall and Mary Butts.

Dr. Roger Nooe Gains Community Recognition for Study of the Homeless in Knoxville

by Michael Silence

Editor's note: The following story originally appeared on page 1 of the January 27, 1999, edition of the* Knoxville News-Sentinel *and is excerpted by permission of the Knoxville News-Sentinel Co.

There has been a disturbing rise in the number of homeless women, children, and minorities in Knoxville, concluded a recent study directed by Dr. Roger Nooe, a professor in the UT College of Social Work. In addition, area jails are becoming modern-day "asylums" for the homeless, said Nooe.

"There are far more women and children on the streets. It is a very significant increase," Nooe said.

In fact, in February of 1998 researchers found about 150 of the approximately 1,200 homeless were age 18 or under, he said. Of those 1,200, about 28 percent were women, up from 22 percent in 1996. In 1998, about 15 percent were age 18 or under, up from 12 percent in 1996. And about 30 percent were nonwhite, as compared to 19 percent in 1996.

The study was sponsored by the Knoxville Coalition for the Homeless, which started the first survey in 1986. The coalition was formed in 1985 by then-Mayor Kyle Testerman and has grown to include people representing shelters, social service agencies, health and mental-health providers, housing providers, advocacy groups, law enforcement agencies, religious organizations, government, and businesses.

A 19-year-old homeless woman named Erica forages for food in a dumpster. Stories about Erica and other homeless young people can be found on the Internet at http://www.auschron.com/gallery/

With Nooe supervising, extensive data and information for the most recent survey was collected by 31 interviewers. It was presented at a press conference on January 26, 1999, with several members of the coalition present.

Reasons for homelessness found in the latest survey are consistent with all previous surveys—chronic and severe mental illness, substance abuse, and chronic unemployment.

For example, the survey found more than one-third of the homeless are alcoholics. More than 73 percent had been in jail at some time, which prompted Nooe to suggest that jails are becoming even more of a revolving door for the homeless. More than 50 percent reported substance abuse. For minorities, women, and children, a loss of public benefits was a significant factor in becoming homeless, Nooe said.

"Examination of the characteristics of homeless women suggests that family problems, including abuse, conflicts, separation, and divorce, were major causes of homelessness," the report states.

More women also had children age 18 or under than found in previous studies, leading to the increase in the percentage of homeless children.

The report states that among minorities, there has been a loss of public benefits in addition to an increase in the number of homeless. It is believed that an influx of Hispanics into East Tennessee has contributed to the higher number of homeless people.

In other findings, the number of homeless military veterans dropped from 28 percent to 21 percent, and the survey continued to show a trend of fewer of Knoxville's homeless being from Tennessee. The survey found homeless from 28 states and three foreign countries, as opposed to 27 states and no foreign countries in 1996. That suggests a more "transient" homeless population in Knoxville.

***Michael Silence is a staff writer for the* Knoxville News-Sentinel.**

"The Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association is always looking for ways to give back to the community, and we're interested in helping people who are majoring in the field of Social Work. We feel this is something that helps fulfill our purpose as an organization. So we decided to give three $15,000 scholarships to universities in East, West, and Middle Tennessee. The UT College of Social Work was the clear choice for the East Tennessee award."

—Paul Lewis,
outgoing president of the Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association

Dean Sowers holds a check for $15,000 given to the UT College of Social Work for a scholarship in honor of Knox County Juvenile Court Judge Carey Garrett (left).This scholarship is funded by the Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association. Paul Lewis, outgoing president of the association (standing on the right), made the presentation.

Larry Gibney, MSSW '70, was awarded an award for meritorious service to the Juvenile Court.

The University of Tennessee College of Social Work
Office of Research and Public Service
319 Henson Hall
1618 Cumberland Ave.
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3334

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Knoxville, TN
Permit No. 481

address service requested

Stimulus

Karen Sowers–Dean
William Bell–Associate Dean, Nashville
Judy Fiene–Associate Dean, Knoxville
Hugh Vaughn–Associate Dean, Memphis

Paul Campbell–Director, Social Work Office of Research and Public Service

Charles Glisson–Director, Children's Mental Health Services Research Center
Margot Morrow–Editor
Jim Hollifield–Editorial Assistant
Lindsay Kromer–Designer

Dean's Office 865.974.3176
Alumni Office 865.589.8094
UT Alumni Association 865.592.3897

EO1-4010-011-00 (99031)

If you received more than one copy of this newsletter, please pass it on to a colleague!