

*Sponsored by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare
with Bush Foundation and IV-E funds, through the Minnesota Department of Human Services.*

**BUSH/IV-E GRANT FUNDED
FOR THE FIFTH YEAR!**

❖ **Bush/IV-E Child Welfare Scholars Selected for 1996-97**

The following 25 students were selected as new award recipients: **Cindy Brinkman, Cuc Bui, Jeremy Carney, Richard Coleman, Nancy Erickson, Bryce Fier, Cindy Grosklags, Claire Hill, Sherry Holloway, Chantel Houg, Ruby Jones, Susie Lomas, Kerry McDonald, Andrea Merims, Kevin Merritt, Faraja Mungai, Nancy Nelson, Angela (Johnson) Schelske, Marilyn Seifert, Jill Simon, Michael Thomas, Phyllis Thompson, Makeba Tredwell, Bryan Vue, La Madrid Wilson, and Pat Worden.**

20 Scholars from 1995-96 were awarded continued funding: **Beth Alvarez, Don Bibeau, Terri Butler, Richard Hach, Kenneth Hanna, Dana Harrison, Lucy Hayes, Phillip Larkins, Raven Mason, Heidi Presslein, Carolyn Reynolds, Melissa Roberts, Paula (Williams) Sanders, Susan Stoterau, Chuehue Thao, Khue Thao, Chong Thor, Felicia Washington, Mao Yang, and Vang Yang.**

**SEMINAR SERIES FOR
COUNTY SUPERVISORS**

❖ A series of four seminars exploring new directions in child welfare policy was offered to county supervisors and managers in June and July under the auspices of the Center. Hennepin County staff participated in the pilot group. **Esther Wat-tenberg**, Director of CASCW, and **Den-ise Revels Robinson**, Director, Family and Children's Services, MN DHS, co-facilitated these meetings arranged to examine emerging legislation and recent Min-nesota policy initiatives. Plans to offer the series to other Minnesota counties are under discussion.

**NEWS OF CHILD
WELFARE ALUMNI**

❖ **Rose Robinson**, Bush/IV-E Alumna, has been selected as the new Executive Director of the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center.

❖ Bush/IV-E Alumna **Carmita McGlory**, 1994 graduate, conducted the seminar "Sup-portive Living Arrangements for Teenage Mothers" at the 5th Annual Conference of the Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention, and Parenting (MOAPPP) held April 29-30.

❖ **Rebecca Anderson Fly**, a Bush/IV-E Child Welfare Alumna, has written a paper on working with biracial teens (which ap-appeared in *Biracial Child*, No. 5). This article is available from the Center in Advanced Studies in Child Welfare upon request (please contact Laura Baugh, 612-626-8202).

❖ **Iris Heavy Runner**, doctoral student and Bush/IV-E Alumna, conducted a training seminar "American Indian Perspectives on Prevention" on May 23, 1996, sponsored by the College of Education and Human Devel-opment, University of Minnesota.

❖ **Rennae Lobitz**, Bush/IV-E Child Wel-fare Alumna ('95-'96), was selected to serve on the Clay County Child Abuse Collabora-tive Committee.

❖ Alumni **Valandra** (formerly Valandra Kamara-Makeba) and **Phu Tai Phan** were accepted to the doctoral program in the School of Social Work, University of Min-nesota.

**1996 MN DHS CHILDREN'S
SYMPOSIUM: OCT. 24 & 25**

❖ The Minnesota Department of Human Services Children's Initiative will be holding a two-day symposium, "Bridges and Crossroads: Linking Children's Mental Health with the Child Welfare System," focusing on the mental health issues of children who are in, or at risk of entering, the child welfare system. The symposium will be held at the Minneapolis North Hilton in Brooklyn Center, Thursday, Oct. 24th and Friday, Oct. 25th.

Due to space restrictions and a need for a cross-section of professionals, attendance is limited. To inquire about receiving an invitation, call Sara Koppe at the Children's Initiative (612-297-3840).

NOTICE OF AVAILABLE MATERIALS

◆ Highlights from Dr. **John Landsverk's** presentation, held April 11, 1996 at the Hubert H. Humphrey Center Cowles Auditorium, "The Mental Health Needs of Children in Foster Care: A Case of Benign Neglect?" are now available. Please contact Mary Kaye LaPointe at (612) 625-6550 to receive a copy.

◆ Proceedings from a statewide conference held September 14, 1995 at the Hubert H. Humphrey Center Cowles Auditorium, "Defining Excellence for School-Linked Services," are now available. Please call Mary Kaye LaPointe at (612) 625-6550 if you would like a copy.

◆ Reprints of the article "Multiple Lenses: Ethnically Sensitive Practice with Involuntary Clients Who Are Having Difficulties with Drugs or Alcohol," published in the Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 4 (2), coauthored by Professor **Ron Rooney**, Associate Director of CASCW, and **Anthony Bibus III** (Augsburg College), are available from the Center. Please contact Laura Baugh at (612) 626-8202 to request a copy.

◆ Also available through CASCW, via Laura Baugh at (612) 626-8202, is "Domestic Partner Abuse Treatment Programs and Cultural Competence: The Results of a National Survey." This article, coauthored by Associate Professor **Oliver J. Williams** and **R. Lance Becker** (Wilder Research Center), appeared in Violence and Victims, 9 (3).

◆ Videotape copies of Dr. **Dolores Norton's** February 23rd presentation, "Parent/Child Linguistic Interaction Related to Social/Psychological and Cognitive Development in Inner City African-American Children: An Ethnographic Longitudinal Approach," have been made available for viewing. Please contact Christine Tomlinson at (612) 626-8738 to borrow a copy.

SPRING ROUNDTABLE: HENNEPIN COUNTY'S R.C.S. PROPOSAL

❖ **Carol Ogren**, Associate County Administrator, Hennepin County, presented the county's proposal known as RCS: "The Results and Community-Oriented System" on April 16, 1996, Freeman Commons, Hubert H. Humphrey Center. A small group of faculty and State and County representatives interested in a community-based child welfare system engaged in a constructive dialogue exploring the strengths and constraints of a community-based system for supporting the welfare of families and children.

NEW FIELD FACULTY

❖ **Kandy Hartson**, MSW, and **Janelle Miedema**, MSW, LGSW, joined the Center's Field Staff and will provide supervision to child welfare scholars in the Moorhead area. Hartson's background includes positions as Assistant Professor, School of Social Work at Moorhead State University; and Clinical Social Worker, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, Moorhead and Fergus Falls, among others. Miedema is the Director of Rural Outreach Programs and Coordinator of Services to Runaways, Youthworks, Fargo in addition to her position as Field Supervisor.

FACULTY CONTRIBUTIONS

◆ **Ann Ahlquist**, Faculty Associate, conducted a half-day training session "Effective Interviewing of Adults and Children" on April 9th. 37 Minnesota counties participated in the training workshop. Also, Instructor Ahlquist led a group of 25 attorneys in a skills workshop "Cognitive Graphic Interviewing of Children" at the National Family and Children's Conference of US Attorneys and the US Bureau of Indian Affairs in Seattle, Washington. In addition, Ahlquist led a workshop entitled "Child Abuse Prevention: Is It Pos-

sible for Our Vulnerable Children?" at the fourth annual statewide children's mental health conference in Brooklyn Park.

◆ Assistant Professor **Sandra Beeman** has been awarded a Fall Quarter leave to prepare a series of publications based on the Kinship Foster Care Project. In July she presented a summary of her report "An Analysis of Children in Out-of-Home Placement in 1992 and 1993: A Minnesota Report" to several MN DHS groups including Children's Initiative staff, Children and Family Services Division staff, and Community Services Division staff, as well as County Agency Directors. (This report is available through CASCW. Please contact Laura Baugh to receive a copy, 612-626-8202.)

◆ Professor **Geraldine Kearsbrook** has been appointed to the Advisory Committee of the American Psychological Association's Presidential Task Force on Adolescent Girls: Stresses and Strengths.

◆ Professor **Jeffrey Edleson** served as an instructor for the US Army's Family Advocacy Staff Training offered in Heidelberg, Germany in April. In mid-July he contributed to workshops in Singapore as a guest of the Singapore Society against Family Violence. In August, he gave the keynote address at the Australian National Conference in Intervention in Domestic Violence held in Perth, Australia.

◆ **Nan Kalke**, Director of the SSW Distance Education Office and CASCW Associate, has been selected to co-present a workshop on Valuing Team and Supervision in a Family-Based Setting along with **Denise Morcomb**, SSW Community Faculty Member, at the Tenth Annual Empowering Families Conference for the National Association for Family Based Services, being held December 11-14 in San Antonio, TX.

◆ Professor and School of Social Work Director **Jean K. Quam** will take a November-January academic leave to conduct research in the University of Minne-

sota Social Welfare History Archives on "Conflict and Confrontation in the Profession of Social Work." Professor **Ron Rooney** will serve as Interim Director during Quam's academic leave.

◆ Professor **Ron Rooney**, Associate Center Director, and **Nan Kalke**, SSW Distance Education Director, provided consultation on "Starting Distance Education" with Austin Community College and Vocational Technical College Educators.

◆ Professor **Esther Wattenberg**, Center Director, contributed to a roundtable forum on "Systemic Barriers to Father Involvement" at the Fathers and Families Roundtable Series, held May 28-29, 1996 in Philadelphia, PA, sponsored by the National Center on Fathers and Families and the Ford Foundation. In June she presented "The Context of Implementing Risk Assessment Protocols: New Challenges in Rapidly Changing Child Protection Services" in San Francisco, CA at the Tenth National Roundtable on CPS Risk Assessment, sponsored by the American Public Welfare Association and the American Humane Association.

◆ Associate Professor **Oliver J. Williams**, PhD, was recently named to the board of the Washburn Child Guidance Center in Minneapolis.

FACULTY AWARDS

◆ Instructor **Ahlquist** received a personal commendation from Minnesota Attorney General Hubert H. Humphrey, III for her outstanding work in training students in the prevention of child abuse.

◆ **Maura Sullivan**, Director of Field Instruction, received the College of Human Ecology's award for Outstanding Achievement for Professional Administrative/Academic Staff.

◆ SSW Professor and Director **Jean K. Quam** was honored with the College of Human Ecology Award for Educational Leadership.

◆ Dr. **Oliver J. Williams** was formally acknowledged by the US Department of Justice for his contributions to the training of State planning teams in the area of evaluative research approaches to domestic violence.

A WORK IN PROGRESS: THE PLACE OF ASSETS IN RISK ASSESSMENT

Jane Gilgun, PhD

◆ One of Associate Professor **Jane Gilgun's** scholarly works in progress, "The Place of Assets in Models of Risk," is receiving concentrated attention by those interested in devising a risk assessment protocol that embraces the concept of family strengths so that an accurate understanding of a family's capacity or incapacity is gained. Professor Gilgun recently presented in Ireland and Washington, DC on this topic. A brief introduction follows:

Risk assessment instruments can enhance services for children and their families in the child welfare system. However, currently available assessment instruments focus almost exclusively on risks. By not including assets in these instruments, practitioners lose a great deal of important information. Instruments that have construct validity and are customized to practice settings have a high likelihood of being accurate and of being perceived as useful by practitioners. However, even a valid risk assessment instrument (i.e., correctly classifies clients 70% of the time) represents a failure rate of 30%. Most frequently, misclassified families are not "at-risk" but are classified as such. An efficient way of increasing classification accuracy is to include items representing assets. Involving practitioners in the development of risk assessment instruments is another important piece. Instruments that fit particular settings will generate items that are more likely to be perceived as useful by those working directly with families and children.

For further information, contact Professor Gilgun at (612) 624-0082 (e-mail: jgilgun@che2.che.umn.edu).

NEWEST RURAL COUNTY TRAINEESHIP RECIPIENT

◆ **Rebecca Bontjes**, Wadena County Social Worker, was awarded a Rural County Child Welfare Traineeship. She joins seven other rural county child welfare staff members in their pursuit of MSW degrees at Rochester and Moorhead distance education sites supported by this two year grant from the Children's Bureau.

Correction

◆ The last line of "Highlights from an Analysis of Children in Out-of-Home Placement" (CASCW NEWS, Winter 1996) should read "Children of younger ages at placement were significantly more likely than older children to be placed in a kinship placement."

EDITORIAL COMMENT

by Esther Wattenberg

◆ Of all the systems that deal with vulnerable families and children, no system was more unloved, in a total way, than the "welfare" (AFDC) program. Despised by the public, held in contempt by politicians, disrespected by those working in it, and scorned by those dependent on its mean resources, the system was demolished in a federal bill more than 1,200 pages long. Not far behind in "unlovability" is the child welfare system. Barely 30 years old, the cry for "reform" is pervasive. In state legislatures across the country, the focus is on curtailing child protection services and limiting the use of out-of-home care for maltreated children. There is no consensus among the various advocacy groups and policy gurus on how to assure the well-being of children, victims of abuse and neglect.

Now a new concern will shortly be capturing headlines: how will the withdrawal of the federal safety net designed 60

years ago to protect a survival base for women and children (the AFDC program) affect the child welfare system?

There are three interlocking questions which bind the dismantling of the welfare system to child welfare. Firstly, poverty is a major factor in child neglect. When families are cut off from the basic maintenance grant provided by the now extinct AFDC program, will the caseloads of neglected and abandoned children devastate the already overburdened child welfare system?

Secondly, will we become so hardened to the plight of poor children that the criteria for responding to maltreatment reports will be driven down to "imminent harm," meaning a

condition bordering on "imminent fatality"?

Thirdly, what will be the outcome of the risky experiments enmeshed in the cry for reform? For child welfare, the move toward a community-based system is full of vague sentiments, but there is meager evidence that a neighborhood inhabited by families suffering from poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, poor housing, and high unemployment can summon the effort to protect its children. A recent Hennepin County report reinforced our grasp of the harsh realities: the highest reports of maltreated children come from the poorest neighborhoods.

John Petraborg, Acting Commissioner of

the Minnesota Department of Human Services has provided a reassuring note in a recent memo to the human services' constituency "...ending federally perceived entitlements does not mean Minnesota will abandon the poor." Specifically, Petraborg notes that bipartisan support to do "what is right for Minnesota and the well-being of our children" will prevail within a tradition that is part of Minnesota's history.

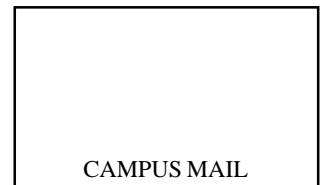
A daunting question remains to be answered: what will be the extent of the crossover from the welfare overhaul? We should be on guard: the child welfare system is bracing for the unknown.

September 05, 1996

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