NC Child Welfare Collaborative

2007 Statewide Conference

Disparities & Disproportionalities in Child Welfare: Reaching for Solutions

The Collaborative held a very successful statewide conference on February 23, 2007. About 180 people attended including current and working scholars, field instructors, child welfare faculty and University Coordinators. We were fortunate to have Marsha Rose Wickliffe, a nationally-known expert and consultant, talk with us about “Disparities and Disproportionalities in Child Welfare – Working Toward Solutions.” Marsha was joined by Alma Shelton from Wake County and Pamela Watkins from Guilford County, both of whom are coordinating efforts in their own DSS’s to address racial disparities in child welfare services. Along with time for networking, awards, and general reconnecting, it was a wonderful day!

Submitted by Laurie Selz-Campbell

Alma Shelton, Senior Leader of Wake Counties Racial Disparities Work Group

Over the next several months, you may be receiving requests from us to take part in our ongoing evaluation activities. We contact scholars at various points in their employment experience—during their employment obligation as well as after completion of their obligation. Please take a few minutes to respond to our requests—it is so very important for us to hear from our graduates, and to learn about what we at the Collaborative are doing well, and could do better, to support Scholars as you move through your careers!
INNOVATIVE PRACTICE BY A CHILD WELFARE SCHOLAR
Awarded to John Benton

This award recognizes a practitioner who has gone above and beyond regular duties, and made significant contributions to strengthening practice with children and families. John Benton, the winner of this award, is one of a small number of alumni who was both a BSW and MSW child welfare scholar. He graduated from NC State University in 2001 and in 2004 he earned an MSW degree from East Carolina University. He began his work at Johnston Co. DSS as a front line social worker and now six years later, he is a Foster Care Licensing Supervisor. He is frequently asked to speak to students about the realities of child welfare practice and he also serves as a field instructor. His work demonstrates both leadership and scholarship in child welfare practice. For the past few years, he has devoted some of his time to work with NC State University social work faculty on a special project to teach students how to objectively assess and document an injurious environment when they assess child neglect. He worked with Linda Williams and Natalie Ames to edit a videotaped home visit that the county DSS used for staff training. This work led to a grant from NC State University and John’s participation in the grant established a clear collaboration with a community agency to teach social work students and to train employed social workers.

His participation enabled the team to have first-hand knowledge of how assessments are done, how observations are documented, and how to set up a training scenario to reflect a variety of potentially injurious environments. In addition he assisted in the field testing of the materials in two DSS agencies.


OUTSTANDING FIELD INSTRUCTOR IN CHILD WELFARE
Awarded to Millie Enos

The winner of this award, Millie Enos, is a licensed clinical social worker who has worked at Chatham County DSS for the past 9 years. She was one of the first field instructors for the Collaborative and has worked with us for seven years. She completed her undergraduate work at North Carolina A&T and earned her MSW at East Carolina. She has been in social work for 20 years.

She goes beyond the usual role of field instructor as she has partnered with JMSW and UNC-G scholars to “bring the agency into the classroom.” She has worked with the faculty to develop an approach to pre-service training that integrates real case experience with the requirements of pre-service training. Using real cases, real documents, real forms and real case narratives, she has helped bring alive the issues of safety, permanence and family well being.

In her role as field supervisor, she adapts to the needs and learning styles of her student interns. She models interviewing skills and then allows the scholar to conduct interviews with supervision in order to provide feedback. She goes in depth about the scholar’s strengths and weaknesses while providing concrete examples in an encouraging and positive manner. She relates conversations about personal issues discussed to the field of social work and constantly challenges her scholars to assess their own potential biases and viewpoints in order to challenge their growth as both an individual and a professional. She advocates for her scholars within the agency. She is always professional and respectful even in the most challenging situations. She demonstrates empathy and support for families and conveys her passion for social work and protecting children and families in need.

Millie Enos, Outstanding Field Instructor for 2007.
INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING FACULTY AWARD
Awarded to Deborah Ryals

This award recognizes creativity and innovation by a university-based educator. Deborah Ryals, the recipient of this award is widely recognized for vision, pragmatism, creativity, compassion, and humor. As we’ve worked together to implement the Collaborative, her humor has helped us get through difficult moments.

Deborah Ryals retired in 2000 from her position as Director of the Greene County DSS. Prior to her retirement, Deb had been teaching social work courses for several years in the ECU Master’s program as an adjunct faculty member and found that she loved the classroom. So when the ECU Collaborative Coordinator’s position became available, she knew it was the ‘perfect fit’ as it combined the opportunity to stay connected to DSS, to teach and to work with a program that has the potential of improving the lives of children and families in our state better. She is deeply committed to children and families and has the courage to stand up for what she believes. One DSS director recently said that she gave the Collaborative credibility when we were struggling to establish a foothold. She is the senior Collaborative Coordinator and we will sorely miss her when she retires at the end of this academic year.

Deborah Ryals, Collaborative Innovative Teaching and Faculty Award Winner

Lobby Day 2007

The NASW-North Carolina Social Work Lobby Day “Connecting the Circle of Social Work” was held this year on March 22, 2007. Social workers and many child welfare scholars from all across the state attended. Kathy Boyd, ACSW, CMSW, Executive Director of the NASW-NC welcomed everyone followed by “Logistics” with Jack Register, MSW, LCSW, Director of Advocacy & Legislation, NASW-NC. During the all day conference, a panel of student interns in advocacy placements spoke about their internships and after lunch, a Legislative Panel consisting of District 41 Rep. Ty Harrell and District 117, Rep. Carolyn Justice spoke. Social workers then visited their representatives.

Scholars & other social workers at Lobby Day

The partnership that formed the Collaborative is working to expand our reach to new schools and new MSW programs. The primary partners are the NC Association of Directors of County Department’s of Social Service, NASW, the Division of Social Services and the various partner universities. **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** As experts in the Collaborative experience and child welfare experts, you know why we need more well trained child welfare social workers. **HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN DO...** write your NC Representative or Senator and ask them to support House Bill 937 or Senate Bill 863. Tell them how the Collaborative helped you and helps your Department. An alternative is to send a similar letter to your local newspaper. If you need to find out who your representative is or get contact information you can find it at the website of the General Assembly, [http://www.ncga.state.nc.us](http://www.ncga.state.nc.us) Thanks for your support!

Daniel Beerman, ACSW, @JMSW
Greetings All! Remember how you thought spring would never reach Boone—especially upon returning from warmer/sunny places “off the mountain”—well, it is still like that!

This is break week and very quiet on the halls of Chapell Wilson. We are in the same space, although the numbers of students grows and grows. Interest in the MSW program also grows—Dr. Ginsberg and Dr. Sprinkle are teaching the first classes of the part-time MSW at Hickory Metrolina Educational Center in Hickory. Selection of applicants to the full-time MSW classes on campus, beginning fall/2007 is currently underway. That will mean programs of 1) BSWs: full-time on-campus and part-time off-campus cohorts in Catawba, Rutherford, Cleveland, and Wilkes counties; 2) MSWs: full-time on-campus and part-time off-campus in Hickory. That means many new names (faculty and adjunct instructors). Last week concluded visits/interviews, for 3 vacant SW faculty positions, with candidates from Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, etc. The names of the current faculty, most familiar to you, are Drs. Ashcraft, Renkert, Christain, Sprinkle, and Green, Ms. Kaplan and Dews, Mr. Powers and Gilbert. Dr. Gross has fully retired and Dr. Kittle works seasonally (fall semester). Amy remains—thank goodness!

Scholar Updates:

Fall/2006 Semester: 5 Scholars: Lauren Cho, Shea Laws, Jessica Peedin, Tracy Reavis and Cassie Snyder graduated in December. So far I have received word of employment of Cassie with Mecklenburg DSS, Jessica with Henderson DSS, and Tracy with Iredell DSS (plus newly-wed!).

Spring/2007 Semester: 4 Scholars continuing: Michelle Cole (doing field placement with Catawba DSS), Amy Storie (doing field placement with Avery DSS and newly-wed), Jessica Reitzel (Rutherford Co-hort), and Rici Goodhue (doing field placement with Gaston DSS). ASU Collaborative was awarded extra service award dollars for this academic year, which resulted in selection of 6 additional scholars. Application/interview/selection process rendered 6 new Scholars for spring semester: Brandi Creech (doing field placement with Wilkes DSS), Ginger Souther (doing field placement with Watauga DSS), Brandon Gaddy (doing field placement with McDowell DSS), Angel Richardson, Rachel Williams, and Samantha Hanner.

These 10 Scholars and I attended the 2 Collaborative events: CW Collaborative Statewide Conference and Law Day at UNC-CH. (Pictured –names with faces—front row: Coord., Brandi, Rachel, Samantha, Amy, Jessica, Brandon; 2nd row: Michelle, Rici, Ginger and Angel). The plan to spend the night in Chapel Hill was to avoid the previous years of being prevented from attending due to bad weather, and something I hope we can do again. The Scholars have commented on enjoying the time with each other, hearing more from those in field and the events (especially Law Day).

Other updates: May/2006 graduates deferred for AS-MSW programs—Jennifer Hall (UNC-Charlotte) and Sara Osborne (ECU) will graduate in May and are already doing DSS applications. I completed a survey regarding Child Welfare Collaborative and IV-E funds regarding ASU—which reflects selection of 53 scholars since spring/2001: 43 graduated; 27 have completed payback commitment and of that number 89% (24) have remained in child welfare/DSS. These are exciting numbers and reflect the difference you are making in communities, agencies and especially the lives of families and children. I am very proud of you!!!!

Happy Spring (and Summer)—let me hear from you.

Judith W.  Child Welfare Education Coordinator
Scholar Grad Makes History

John Benton, a CWEC scholar graduate from both the NCSU (BSW) and ECU (MSW) Collaborative programs, has made history by being the first scholar grad named Director of a county Department of Social Services in North Carolina. John has been appointed Director of the Moore County Department of Social Services effective April 18th. John leaves Johnston County DSS, where he has been employed for the past seven years. As a Child Welfare SW Supervisor III, John supervised foster care licensure, recruitment and clinical services in Johnston County, in addition to having served as a field instructor for student interns.

John grew up in Perquimans County and served almost eight years with the United States Marines before receiving a medical discharge because of a foot injury. John is married and the father of two children, ages 11 and 8 years.

John was also the recipient of the Innovative Practice Scholar Award at the 2007 CWEC Conference, for going above and beyond his regular work duties. He was also recognized at the conference for having been nominated for the Outstanding Field Instructor Award. Congratulations John!

IF YOU LISTEN CLOSELY YOU CAN HEAR THE SOUND OF THE BAR BEING RAISED...

Faith Fletcher, December 2006 ECU Scholar and Summa Cum Laude Graduate. Faith also received the School of Social Work award as the Outstanding BSW Student. Congratulations Faith!

“Tomorrow starts here.”

On May 5, 2007, a total of 28 Child Welfare Scholars from East Carolina University will be awarded social work degrees. Twenty scholars will receive Master of Social Work degrees and eight will be receiving BSW degrees. This is the largest class of scholar graduates in the history of the ECU Collaborative Program and is the largest class of scholar graduates from any of the participating Universities in the history of the program. The 2007 graduating class includes both full-time and Distance Education students from the New Bern cohort and were in field placements in a total of 17 local departments of social services. As ECU celebrates 100 years as an institution of higher learning, the Child Welfare Collaborative is proud to be a part of the

ECU Graduates Four Scholars in December 2006

Four ECU Collaborative Scholars were awarded BSW degrees in December 2006. Within nine weeks of graduation, all were employed in child welfare positions in county departments of social services. Graduates and their employers include:

Faith Fletcher – Johnston Co. DSS
Stephanie Everett Freeman – Franklin Co. DSS
Cara Martin – Edgecombe County DSS
Shirley Williams – Beaufort County DSS

Congratulations Scholar Grads and welcome to the profession!

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education of the child welfare professionals tomorrow. For many of North Carolina’s children and families, tomorrow really does start here.

**MSW Graduates:** Jennifer Ann Back, Shante Andreas Blount, Jessica Mae Bonnlander, Christopher David Byrd, Donna Danette Cullins, Kristen Michelle Crumpler, Shaton Pinkham Daniels, Dee Ann Etherridge, Samuel Wade Everette, Jeffery lee Harrison, David Kendal Keelin, Mona Michelle Lesane, Courtney Leigh McIntyre, Sara Kirkland Osborne, Leah Ruth Spare, Kellie Faye Stephenson, Cynthia LouAnn Sugg, Kristine J. Thomason, Barbara Jean Williams, Crystal Ann Teachey, Sheril Raychon Tyson

**BSW Graduates:** Kendrick Dante Burden, Amy Kathleen Houghtaling-Butcher, Anita Michelle Howard, Lacey Marie Kallestad, Kelly LeAnn Lambert, Rochelle Denise Renfrow

Congratulations and best wishes are extended to Deb Ryals, ECU Collaborative Coordinator. Deb received the 2007 Innovative Teaching and Learning Faculty Award at the recent CWEC Conference and has recently announced her retirement from the University, effective July 31, 2007. Deb welcomed the arrival of her second grandchild, Brayden, earlier this month, and is looking forward to having more time to spend with Brayden, his 2-year-old sister Sydney, and to become reacquainted with her woodworking tools.

Thanks Deb for being such a force in the development of North Carolina’s Collaborative Program and the education of so many of our scholars! We love you!
Over the past year we have had a variety of contacts with our graduates. We enjoy them all and wish they would happen more often. For example, Dan got to spend a few minutes with Lori Davis in Catawba County, while doing Recruitment and Retention Training and Maura got to have lunch with Kristin Crumpler (BSW, 2006) while she was facilitating the Medical Aspects of Child Abuse and Neglect Training in March. We run into folks on agency visits, we call them to just say hello and we get emails from graduates asking us questions or giving us an update.

Some of our locally based folks help us out in student selection. Working with us this year have been Natasha Johnson, Alicia Kaplan, Audrey Thomas and Melody Moore. We have also had help in the classroom over the past year as Social Services for Children was taught by Alicia Kaplan, Debra Moore and Allison Herring Elliott last spring.

We LOVE the opportunities to get grads involved in the activities of the Collaborative and the university programs at NC A&T and UNCG. We invite you to contact us if you would like to help us with student selection or other activities.

One of the things that we have found is that our grads have much to teach us. Here are some of the things we have learned from you.

- Most of you tell us that you are willing to struggle with the complexity of the work if you feel like you have supportive supervision.
- Focusing on the shortcomings of your agency drives you crazy. Focus on the needs of your clients keeps you centered and focused. When the shortcomings of your agency interfere with you meeting the needs of your clients, you leave the agency.
- You tell us that generally you like MRS and that you think it allows you to do better work.
- The longer you are out of school, the more sense the theory makes.
- Working in child welfare is always a challenge. It is often rewarding, sometimes frustrating.

Since we started at the Collaborative in 1999, Debbie Ryals has been our colleague at East Carolina. She is retiring at the end of this year. Simply stated, Debbie is the BEST. We have enjoyed her wit, her intellect and her dedication. We will miss her and wish her the best. We are all the better because of her work.

Our May graduates are Marcy Adams, Danielle Farr, Carla Holloman, Liz McGhee, Zina Meeks, Adrienne Turner and Shawna Morrison-Flood. They are already doing interviews and getting ready to move into their DSS agencies. They have been a great group and we will miss them!

Submitted by: Dan Beerman & Maura Nsonwu

Eight of our current NC State Collaborative students attended the North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative Statewide Annual Conference on ‘Disparities and Disproportionalities in Child Welfare, Reaching For Solutions’, held on our campus at the McKimmon Center. Also, in attendance, NCSU recognizes their collaborative alums, field supervisors and program instructors. The conference proved to be an “eye opening” learning experience, or a refresher topic for many of us in the social work field. I think that we all left the conference with a deeper understanding of our responsibilities as leaders in the profession of Child Welfare to apply what we learned at the conference and return to our profession motivated to build a better collaborative child welfare program in our respective agencies and universities.

The conference built on today’s understanding of racial disparities by showing the video, Race- the Power of Illusion, Episode 3, The House We Live In. The film depicted the political making of America from the standpoint of race and how the fallout of these barriers still exists in today society. We viewed statistics and evaluated the data from...
the standpoint of looking at disparities in the treatment of minority race cases and how we can recognize barriers within our agencies that may be causing these disparities. Throughout the conference we were reminded by conference speaker, Marsha Rose Wickliffe’s, ending remarks, “You know Better, NOW you have to do Better!”

Our Collaborative students found the conference a rewarding experience. I am proud to recognize our senior Collaborative student, Lesley Franciscy, as her last research paper covered this topic and she was well informed on the material presented at the conference and on the programs in place in Wake and Guilford Counties, Racial Disparities Work groups.

Spotlight on: University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Law School/Social Work Event

The Chapel Hill Child Welfare Education Collaborative hosted its annual Law School Event on February 24, 2007. More than 100 people participated in the event, which originated in 2001 as a small classroom exercise in the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work’s child welfare class, taught by Clinical Assistant Professor Joanne Caye. Currently, the exercise is held at the UNC School of Law.

Faculty, staff and students from Collaborative universities across the state participated in the event in which scholars and law students engaged in mock trials, experienced testifying in court, and attended a 90-minute class on courtroom evidence and etiquette taught by attorney Alisa Huffman, Esq.

The educational experience gave scholars the opportunity to experience a court room environment and to testify on a witness stand, something most child welfare workers eventually experience.

Also participating in the event as acting judge was the Honorable Ann McKown, district judge in Durham County, and attorneys Judith Guibert, Esq. and Sydney Batch, Esq. who consulted with the students. A presentation by former foster youth, Ashley Brown, concluded the event. Brown spoke to...
the group about her experiences in the foster care system and about how social workers have impacted her life in significant and positive ways.

Mock Court Room.

The Law School/Social Work Event is one of the activities that all scholars find beneficial when they go to work. Going to court comes with working in child welfare and the scholars who participate in this experience benefit far more than we could have imagined. This is an opportunity to make mistakes and no one is hurt by them. We have found both the law students and the scholars take their roles very seriously and want to do the best job possible. After going to work, many scholars have said what a wonderful experience they had at this event and were so glad they had the opportunity to participate.

Our spotlight this spring is on the Law School/Social Work Event at UNC-CH and the wonderful efforts of Joanne Caye to make this such an annual success.

UNC-CH 2007 Scholars and Alums

Skills Practice at UNC-CH

Tim Hutchins is 11, recently sent to live with his Aunt, Mrs. Franklin, by his Mother, who worried about his gang connections in the city where he grew up. Eskerlo, 19, also lives with Mrs. Franklin. Tim isn’t happy about the current situation, and his anger sparks out at everyone around him, including the social worker who has come to speak with the family about some inappropriate discipline Ms. Franklin used with Tim a few days ago. Before the social worker can do more than introduce herself, Tim let’s fly with some cuss words, disparages Mrs. Franklin and Eskerlo. Mrs. Franklin looks at the social worker with disdain “Is it okay for him to speak to me like that??” At first the social worker is stymied, but then she finds her feet and begins the conversation. “No, no he doesn’t have to speak like that.” The interview moves forward.

In the next room, the social worker is explaining concurrent planning to Paulo and Regina Gonzales, letting them know that they have not made the necessary changes needed to bring their young son home, and time is running out. Paulo is very angry with his wife, and not sure if he is ready to have this little one come back home at all. The atmosphere is tense.

Fifteen minutes later, Tim, Mrs. Franklin, and the social worker are laughing about his outrageous behavior. The structured Skills Practice is over. Now the student hears feedback from her simulated role players. Tim is actually an administrator from Duke University, who has volunteered for this process for several years now. “Nothing I would do would be worse than some of the clients the students will see when they graduate” she says with a smile. “I like to give them an interesting experience.” Mrs. Franklin, actually a UNC Social Work faculty member agrees, “It’s a chance for the student’s to practice. And it’s enjoyable for us.” The Child Welfare Collaborative Scholars in the Chapel Hill Program engage in this skills practice during their specialized Child Welfare Perspectives course. The Scholars receive a summary of the scenario they will deal with about a week before the practice. All the situations have to do with typical child welfare situations, either for direct practice social workers, or for management social workers.
Jennie Vaughn, Rebecca Brigham (UNC-CH Field Director), and Melissa Neff, UNC-CH scholars

Students are surprised how nervous they feel before the role play. This is not a role play in class with their fellow students. Many of these people are unknown to the students. One student said that after she got started, she forgot it was a role play, and was surprised when time was called. The student's appreciate the feedback from their "families", and take it to heart. Some of the families take on a persona of their own. Students who have already taken the class will ask their colleagues if they had the Horton family, or the Gonzales family. It gives the students an opportunity to try out their interviewing skills in a semi-real situation, with people they don’t know. It also brings staff, faculty and people from the community into the school to spend time sharpening the student’s professional roles.

Submitted by: Joanne Caye, UNC-CH Collaborative

If you have a story for the Alumni Newsletter, please email them to jeadams@email.unc.edu or call me at 919-962-6452. Everyone at the Collaborative knows you are doing wonderful work in your practice and we would like to share that with other scholars. The next newsletter will be in the fall of 2007.