



# The Scholar Alumni Newsletter

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Jo Adams, Editor

## Field Summit Brings Alumni, Field Supervisors, and Instructors Together

Most students remember their field placements long after they have forgotten the names of their professors or specific classes they attended. A rigorous, challenging, and supported internship can be a major source of learning for a budding professional social worker. Knowing this, the Collaborative Central Office supported a Field Education Summit in Chapel Hill, on June 8, 2006.

Field instructors, students, graduates, university faculty, and field directors from all the CWEC institutions came together to consider ways to increase the challenge of field activities for BSW, Foundation and Advanced level students placed in child welfare agencies. Guided by professional trainers and facilitators, John Alderson and Sara Jarvis, the group was able to define specific activities that would meet the field based competencies developed by the Division of Social Services for pre-service. Groups argued, agreed, discussed, laughed and worked their way through the tasks set forth by John and Sara. The end result was a written set of activity templates moving from an inexperienced, "green as grass" student, to one who comes to the program with prior involvement with the system and needs a higher challenge. A rich, rigorous internship is the basis for excellent practice and service to client families in the child welfare system.

JoAnne Caye  
UNC-CH Faculty &  
Curriculum Committee Chair



Sara Jarvis facilitator at the Field Education Summit.



Scholar alums, Instructors, Field Supervisors and others participate in the activities.

## EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY Hosts Annual Recognition Luncheon



The North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative at East Carolina University School of Social Work held its 2006 Scholar Recognition Event on Friday, April 21, 2006 at Rock Springs Center in Greenville. The annual event is held each spring to honor ECU's graduating CWEC scholars and to recognize the important contributions made by their DSS field instructors. Scholar graduates, ECU faculty and representatives from nine county departments of social services were among the 40 guests. Those attending enjoyed a buffet lunch, followed by welcomes from Dr. Linner Griffin, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs, East Carolina University and Dr. Margie Gallagher, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, College of Human Ecology, East Carolina University.



### **JoAnn Lamm, Keynote Speaker at ECU's Annual Recognition Luncheon.**

Keynote speaker for the event was Ms. JoAnn Lamm, Deputy Director, North Carolina Division of Social Services, who shared "North Carolina's

Vision for Child Welfare" and offered words of encouragement and support for the 2006 scholar graduates.

Ms. Rhonda James, graduating CWEC Scholar and Washington County DSS Social Worker, also addressed the group on behalf of the graduating scholars. Ms. James challenged the group with her "Top 10 List" of things to remember as a child welfare social worker.



### **Rhonda James, Graduate Speaker.**

Graduating scholars were individually recognized as a part of the afternoon festivities, and were presented ECU Collaborative gifts, including the much anticipated 'CWEC briefcase' and pre-service training certificate. Departments of Social Services' field instructors for the scholar graduates were also individually recognized and presented gifts of appreciation on behalf of the ECU Collaborative.

Congratulations to the ECU Scholar Graduates of 2006! You are an outstanding group of professional social workers and we are pleased that you have chosen a future in public child welfare.

Beth Osborne  
ECU Faculty

*During the 2006-2007 season, there will only be two Alumni Newsletters: one in the fall and one next spring. If you have an article you would like to submit, please send it to [jeadams@email.unc.edu](mailto:jeadams@email.unc.edu).*

## NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

Ashley Manning completed her field placement in the foster home licensing unit at Johnston Co. DSS under the supervision of Alumni Scholar John Benton, '04, MSW and SW Supervisor III. On May 8, 2006, Ashley was hired by Johnston County as a foster care licensing worker and started in her new position on May 15, 2006. I saw Ashley at Field Summit and she loves it, paycheck and all.

Lora Hampton completed her field placement in Wilson County under the supervision of Andy Payne, BSW. Lora earned high performance marks in the field. Unfortunately, Wilson Co. did not have any job vacancies, so Lora interviewed with Halifax Co. DSS and accepted the position of Family Assessment Worker. Lora started her position on May 15, 2006.

Scholars Leslie Skinner and Amy Melton are taking a short break before entering the professional world of Child Welfare. They plan to begin searching for a job at the start of the new fiscal year. Leslie Skinner completed field in Durham County under the supervision of Tammy Yelton, MSW in their Prevention Unit. Leslie performed very well in field and leaves her experience with a strong reference from Tammy.

Wake County DHS, Eastern Regional Center sponsored Amy Melton as a student intern. Amy

was supervised by Lisa Cauley, MSW, in the Foster Care Unit. Amy plans to seek employment in CPS (Child Protective Services) in the counties surrounding Wake.

North Carolina State University is excited to be bringing the Child Welfare Collaborative Waiver Program to our recently established MSW Social Work Program. We anticipate our first MSW Waiver Student this Fall of 2006.

Deborah Hairr  
Collaborative Coordinator



**Ashley Manning, Amy Melton, Leslie Skinner and Lora Hampton, NCSU Scholar Graduates**

## APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Just wanted to wish everyone a satisfying and safe summer!!! I realize "summers" take on a whole new definition once you have graduated and are in the real (working) world.

Never the less I hope you'll take some time for yourself.

You must be doing super social work in Child Welfare; I keep getting acknowledgements from various county departments of social services regarding the outstanding work you are doing, plus requests for more ASU collaborative scholars. Remember the Social Work Program of ASU, the Collaborative and especially me--- are very proud of you!!! Hope to have lots of news in the fall.

Take care, Judith W., Child Welfare Coordinator



**Appalachian State University Scholars**

## UNC-CHAPEL HILL

NC Chapel Hill finished the 05-06 academic year celebrating the graduation of 13 scholars. Two of the scholars have already moved into full time positions, and more are being interviewed. We wish them the best of luck! One scholar, Emily Hamer, flew off to Ecuador to increase her Spanish language abilities. We know her future employer will appreciate that.

Joanne Caye went to Buncombe Co. to visit Andrea Burgess who is finishing her field credits to finish her degree. While there, Joanne had lunch and/or meetings with several Chapel Hill Alumni, including Carey Shira (04) and Alisha Davis (03) both supervisors now, Tara Foster (04), Priya Kapoor (04) Tara Chandler (06) and Allison Little. (05). The conversation focused on the preparation Scholars receive for employment and what other supports would be useful. It was a fine lunch and a great conversation!

In June, our Selection Committee broke into four teams, interviewing six new applicants each,

and completed the process of choosing our next scholar cohort. We look forward to working with these enthusiastic, committed students, now and in the future.



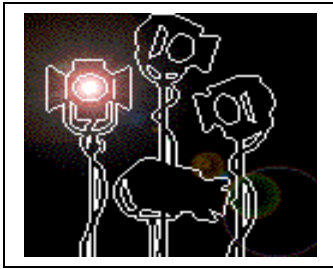
**LaToya Jackson, Program Assistant and Joanne Caye, Collaborative Faculty, UNC-CH**

## JMSW HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



JMSW graduated eight MSW's and five BSW's (three waivers and two scholars) in May 2006. The two BSW scholars are now in advanced standing at ECU. Most of the MSW's already have employment offers. Maura Nsonwu, Collaborative faculty, has developed a simulation project with faculty from the School of Nursing that allows social work and nursing students to explore the interconnections between the two professions. Dan Beerman worked with other Collaborative colleagues and the staff of NASW-NC to help organize a successful Advocacy Day in Raleigh. We had

attendance of about 130 from a number of social work programs across the state. Hats off of Appalachian State for bringing a crowd down from the mountains! The Collaborative also invited a group of recently retired DSS employees to talk with soon-to-be graduate students about how to survive in the demanding world of the DSS. Many of these retirees came back to work with Dan Beerman and Susan Dennison in a focus group to further explore their views on how to sustain yourself with a career in the DSS/child welfare setting. JMSW had a great session for students that focused on program funding the child welfare. Debbie Ryals and Evelyn Williams brought their usual high degree of skill in presenting some of the key issues in funding and managing in the DSS setting. DSS directors, Susan Osborne (Alamance) and John Shore (Guilford), spent a morning with the scholars. They shared perspectives on the life and role of the DSS director and we had some fine placement experiences this year in Alamance, Chatham, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rowan and Wake counties.



## Spotlight on Washington County DSS A Story of Two Successes

I met Karma Warren at the ECU Annual Recognition Luncheon in May and in the course of our conversation, she told me a story of success for the DSS in Washington County. Washington County is a rural county in the eastern part of North Carolina, with a total population of 13,335 in 2004. This is a small rural county but it has a DSS whose child welfare workers have accomplished much as you will see as these two stories of success unfold.

The first story has to do with a family that the team members of Washington Co. were able to assist.

A report was received at Washington Co. DSS about two young children. One child was walking around with a dirty diaper and he offered the reporter a piece of cake with a roach crawling on it. The report was called in and was accepted for investigation. Luenetta Lewis began the investigation but also started a dialogue with the family. The family was found in need of services. Since the workers are a team, Luenetta made several recommendations as they began to build a case plan. Then she forwarded the case to Rhonda.

Rhonda James, Case Planning/Case Management, referred them for several different services. Parenting classes were conducted with the family and they were instructed on home safety issues, fire safety, secondhand smoke, depression, stress management, budgeting, self-esteem and anxiety disorders. The father was finally able to obtain employment. Rhonda then made a child care referral, which turned out to be the turning point in the family's lives. The youngest child was not potty trained (at 4 years of age), could not speak clearly, and was very active. The daycare initially thought they were not going to be able to take the child but decided to give him a chance. The child became potty trained, his speech improved, and he calmed down due to structure. The mother then felt less overwhelmed. The mother was transported to DSS to follow-up on Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Job Link and she utilized Job

Link to search for employment and she found a job. The family was then referred to the Economic Improvement Council to apply for Section 8. Rhonda then gave the family information about Habitat for Humanity, which resulted in the family being selected to obtain a Habitat home. The family has attended meetings and workshops and with sweat equity and volunteer hours of work on their new home, they should be moving in soon. They are anxiously awaiting their new home and the stability, they believe, it will give to their children. Washington County DSS is an agency where the safety of children is their first priority and then to maintain children in their home with their families. The social workers strive to achieve those goals by using social work skills, respecting families and seeing strength in the family unit.

The next story of success is the DSS that facilitated the first success story I told you about. Normally a DSS for a rural county this small, one MSW (usually the Director) would be good. But the Director of the agency, Jerry Rhodes, himself an MSW, has managed to assemble a team of three (3) MSWs and all of them, including Mr. Rhodes, got their degrees from East Carolina University and the others are all ECU scholar graduates. Here is a little information about the extraordinary members of this team.

The Director of Washington Co. DSS, Jerry Rhodes, is an East Carolina MSW graduate. Mr. Rhodes was involved at the beginning of the Child Welfare Collaborative. He was on the first State Advisory Board back in 1999-2000 when the Collaborative began. He is well acquainted with the Collaborative because he is on the Selection Committee for ECU. There had been field interns in the agency in the past, with most of them in foster care before the Collaborative began giving pre-service and letting scholars intern in CPS.

In 2004, Karma Warren came to the agency as a scholar field intern. She was completing her MSW from East Carolina. After her internship,

she was offered employment at the agency. The position was Family and Children Services Supervisor. This includes supervision all of child welfare workers from intake to adoption. She supervises nine workers: five child welfare workers, three day care workers and one services intake worker. There were two BSW child protective service workers when Karma came to the agency, Luenetta Lewis (the first BSW in the agency) and Rhonda James.



**Karma Warren, MSW, Family & Children Services Supervisor, Washington Co. DSS**

In 2005, one year later, Luenetta Lewis enrolled in ECU and became an MSW scholar. After graduation, she returned to Washington Co. DSS. Luenetta grew up and still lives in this area and says it helps knowing the clients. She has a good rapport with them and treats them like they want to be treated. Luenetta has been at the agency for six years now.



**Luenetta Lewis, MSW, Investigations/Family Assessments, Washington Co. DSS**

In 2006, one year later, Rhonda James enrolled at ECU, became a scholar and she too returned to Washington Co. DSS with her MSW. Rhonda lives in Martin County (a

neighboring county). She has been at the agency for four years.



**Rhonda James, MSW, Case Planning/Case Management, Washington Co. DSS**

Now, in this small rural county in eastern North Carolina, out of 60 workers, there are four MSW's and three of them are scholars (plus the Director)—from ECU—in child protective services. Mr. Rhodes said when the Collaborative began, he had only hoped of having one MSW on staff. Now, he has three. I find Mr. Rhodes to be the driving force behind chain of events at Washington Co. He is already in the planning stage to see how the agency can help get his MSW's licensed. He said, "Everyone wears a lot of hats and it's worth the effort to keep people on staff and have good stability." He wants the agency and the families of Washington Co. to benefit from having workers with degrees.

Here we have two stories of success. One is of a small county in eastern North Carolina with extraordinary child welfare scholars doing very significant work. The second is of a family that was helped by these incredible social workers. Washington County DSS is a symbol of hope for children and families in that county and our State.