



INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS



Center for International Social Work Studies
University of Connecticut School of Social Work
West Hartford, Connecticut USA

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www.ssw.uconn.edu/cisws.htm

Greetings from the Director

The Center for International Social Work Studies is in the midst of another busy year. At this time last year, we were assisting the School community in addressing the impact of the September 11th attacks. The sometimes harsh realities of global interdependence continue to be evident as we now face the possibility of war. More positively, the Center is actively involved in the University's Human Rights initiative and will be sponsoring a major conference in April. See more details inside. We have also led initiatives to bring international discussants into the classroom through web-based distance education technologies.

The Center is fortunate to have Abigail Amorim, second year community organization major, as an intern for the 2003-2003 year. She has initiated a Lunch and Learn series featuring our international and "internationally connected" students. We invite readers to join us for these programs, our April Human Rights Conference, and International Day.

Lynne Healy
Director



CENTER STAFF

Lynne Healy, Director
Abigail Amorim, Student Intern
Cari Carter, Student Worker
Pam Harrison, Secretary

SPRING SEMESTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Lunch and Learn/Tell Your Story Series
Mark your Calendars
1-2 P.M.

- 3/25 Trinidad - Reia Brumble
- 3/27 Brazil - Abigail Amorim
Social Welfare
- 4/8 INTERNATIONAL DAY
- 4/10 Sub-Saharan Africa - Paul Yeboah
Water Pollution in Sub Saharan countries
- 4/21 Social Work Day at the United Nations
- 4/28 Human Rights Conference

DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

- Housing Crisis in Post-Apartheid S. Africa - Priscilla Mbizeni
- Peru - Eddie Salinas
- "Santeria" - Jose Pla
- Jamaican Funeral Tradition - Yvonne and Ann Paterson

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Shirley Gunn Continues Human Rights Work - by Marilyn N. Moch
- Peta Anne Baker
Growing Old in Hartford's West Indian Community
- Visitor from Krgysztan
- International Students and Company
- AND MORE . . .

SHIRLEY GUNN CONTINUES HUMAN RIGHTS WORK

by Marilyn Moch

South African social worker and organizer Shirley Gunn was a participant and speaker at the Third Annual Comparative Human Rights Conference held in October, 2002, at the University of Connecticut (UConn), USA. The conference featured holders of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) chairs from various countries and human rights activists from South Africa.

The theme of the Conference, sponsored by the Chair in Comparative Human Rights at UConn, was "Effective Approaches to the Realization of Human Rights." Holders of UNESCO Chairs are charged by UNESCO with the task of disseminating information that can help build a culture of human rights. The UConn Chair, Amii Omara-Otunnu, collaborates with institutions all over the world, but focuses primarily on South Africa. Interim Co-Chair of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of School of Social Work (IASSW) Lynne Healy, led a workshop. Also participating was HRC Commissioner for North America, Marilyn Moch, who accompanied Shirley on her trip.

While in the USA, Shirley inaugurated the video film, *WE NEVER GIVE UP*, with viewings at Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service and the University of Syracuse. The film, with Shirley as producer, documents in oral history form the experiences of ordinary South Africans who participated in and those who were excluded from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The storytellers are members of the Khulumani Support Group, Western Cape, who are involved in a protracted battle to hold the South African government accountable to its promise to pay final reparations.

In 1990, the IFSW was active in the successful world-wide campaign to obtain Shirley's release from a South African prison. She was charged by the apartheid regime with bombing the Council of Churches building in Capetown. With the fall of the regime, a former minister of the regime and a general testified to the TRC that they had bombed the building and accused Shirley for the crime as a way of silencing the anti-apartheid activist.

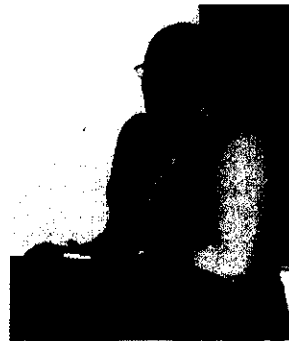
A copy of the film for viewing can be obtained through the Center for International Social Work Studies



PETA ANNE BAKER

"Growing Old in Hartford's West Indian Community"

by Abigail Amorim



Peta-Anne Baker

Visiting Professor at the UConn School of Social Work, and member of the faculty at the Department of Sociology/Psychology & Social Work at the University of West Indies - Jamaica, presented her study of West Indian migrant women aged 55+ living in Greater Hartford.

Because of the lack of information available about this group, her study was an attempt to bring attention about this population to policy makers, planners and practitioners. Using a cross-sectional exploratory research design, Baker interviewed participants about their family and community roles, income, health, sense of achievement, social support, etc. Among the many findings include the population needs for accessible health care, education on how to access services, community support, better understanding of the aging process, senior advocacy, etc.

She also found out that the reasons why many of the elderly were living with their adult children was because their adult children need them for financial support and day care help. Previous studies have assumed that they were dependent on their adult children. Surprisingly enough, when

asked if their migrant expectations were fulfilled, many of the respondents answered "no." These stories were particularly poignant.

Farewell Peta Anne . . .

Peta Anne left UConn to return to Jamaica, but she will be missed by all of us. Her dedication, organizational skills, and outstanding knowledge will be among our memories, and she has definitely been a role model for many of us students. The Center for International Social Work Studies wishes you the best!!!



**COMPARATIVE HUMAN RIGHTS
CONFERENCE
by Abigail Amorim**

The UConn third annual international comparative human rights conference, held on October 2002, brought several UNESCO chairholders from diverse countries, including South Africa, Switzerland, India, Germany, Israel, Jordan, Netherlands, and the U.S. The School of Social Work hosted the participants who came to the campus for a special visit and presentation on October 21st. We had the opportunity to hear *Ahmed Kathrada*, a veteran of South Africa's liberation movement and an anti-apartheid leader, talk about his experiences during the Apartheid era. Kathrada is a well-known political and intellectual friend of Nelson Mandela since the 1940's and spent 26 years on Robben Island with Mandela as a political prisoner. He recently authored a book, Letters from Robben Island.



**INTERNATIONAL CENTER PRESENTATIONS
FALL 2002
by Abigail Amorim**

On September 24th, Dr. Kasumi Hirayama, professor of group work, presented the results of an interesting study that she co-authored with Dr. Michie Hesselbrock. The

study compared perceptions of UConn students with those of students in Japan on *gender roles*, an East-West comparison.

The CISWS, along with the Institute for Political Social Work, showed on October 15 the documentary "Current of Change: Social Work in Armenia," produced by Tom Felke. After the video, students Cari Carter, Ashley Testa, Carli Howard and Tom Felke, who visited Armenia during last Spring break, had the opportunity to share with the audience their visit experience and answer questions about social work issues in Armenia as well. For information about the video, contact the CISWS.

On November 12th, the Puerto Rican Latino Studies faculty, L.A.S.O. organization, and the CISWS sponsored a panel presentation of community practitioners on Latino migration issues. The panel consisted of 5 Latina women who shared their migration experience in the U.S.



**WORLD AIDS DAY - DECEMBER 10
by Lynne Healy**

Originally scheduled earlier, the snow-delayed program for World AIDS day was a great success, nonetheless. A full program was organized and implemented by Professor Barbara Dicks and a team of students. Using the U.N.



Brian Libert

theme of "Live and Let Live" Stigma, Discrimination and Human Rights, the program featured local and international perspectives on AIDS and stigma. Keynote speaker Brian Libert, member of Ryan White Planning Council employed as HIV Outreach Coordinator at Community Health Services, Inc. of Hartford, and Co-Chair of the Community Planning Group/State of Connecticut, discussed his own journey from shock to stigma to activism and identified key areas for prevention and treatment.



Student planning group for World AIDS Day with Professor Barbara Dicks and guest speaker, Brian Libert.

The International Center introduced a brief video documenting the story of a South African couple struggling with AIDS. The impact of a women's support group organized by Professor Vishanthie Sewpaul of the University of Natal, School of Social Work, was a key factor in the helping process. One client's story: "She used to just cry all day; now she is employed full time by the Health Ministry as an AIDS outreach worker." Educational poster displays prepared by the students from the Health Substantive Area enhanced the event.



FACULTY/STAFF NOTES

Barbara Pine and Robin Spath presented a paper at "Looking After Children" conference in Oxford, England in September. Pamela Harrison of the clerical staff assisted with the conference administration in Oxford.

Lynne Healy attended the Executive Committee meeting of the International Association of Schools of Social Work in Auckland, New Zealand, in January 2003. She is Vice President for North America and the Caribbean. While at the meeting, she presented a panel presentation for the Board Seminar held with educators from the New Zealand Schools of Social Work.

Kasumi Hirayama gave a presentation on social work education in the United States at Lutheran College Social Work Department in Tokyo on January 11, 2003.



A VISIT FROM KYRGYZSTAN by Cari A. Carter



Pictured l-r, Lynne Healy, Margarita Emelyanova, and Kasumi Hirayama

Margarita Emelyanova, an English teacher from the former Soviet country of Kyrgystan located in Central Asia, visited the School of Social Work in December of last year (2002). The visit was arranged by Professor Kasumi Hirayama. Although she is an English teacher by profession, her extensive involvement in Social Work projects led to a 3 month long visit at the Boston University School of Social Work (BUSSW). During her visit at the UConn School of Social Work, Ms. Emelyanova spoke to the International Seminar class about the country of Kyrgystan and various projects that she is involved with there. One of these projects involves an organization called IPPF (International Planned Parenthood Foundation). IPPF was founded in 1952 in Bombay and is now based in eight countries - India, Germany, China, The Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, UK and the US. The goal of the international organization is to ensure reproductive health for both men and women through culturally appropriate education and outreach. Ms. Emelyanova is working with a grant sponsored by IPPF focused on education and outreach to youth. For more information about IPPF visit their website www.ippf.org.

Emelyanova is also involved with a program called Equal to Equal, a peer led sex education program. Emelyanova is involved in projects working with refugee children from Afghanistan and other neighboring countries and educating communities on the risks of HIV/AIDS. Ms. Emelyanova explained the role of a social worker in Kyrgystan is to work with the handicap and elderly, while teachers are responsible for issues affecting youth. This division

of responsibility, according to Emelyanova, works well within the programs she is involved with. The International Seminar class was full of questions by the end of the presentation and Emelyanova was more than pleased to answer them. Margarita Emelyanova also met with professors Lynne Healy and Kasumi Hirayama.



**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND
COMPANY
Fall 2002
by Cari A. Carter**

With the start of a new school year, the International Students and Company student organization group welcomed three new international students to the School of Social Work. The students arrived from Japan, Trinidad and Ghana. The new students were treated to a "welcome" dinner hosted by the Center's director Lynne Healy. New students and old students gathered for an organizational meeting in October and we are happy to report that our membership has grown. The room was full of bright eyes and smiling faces, we began to make plans for the year including a visit to the United Nations and participating in the annual International Day at the School of Social Work. If you are interested in being involved in the International Students and Company group, please contact us at the Center for International Social Work Studies either stop in and visit or email us - cisws@uconnvm.uconn.edu.



**2003 Calendar of Events
Human Rights Initiative:
From Ideas to Action**

The success of UConn's Human Rights semester held in the fall of 2001 led to funding a full year of Human Rights programs for 2002-03. The School of Social Work received two of the grants for programs.

February 20

Title: Urban Poverty and Human Rights: Race, Power, and Wealth in the United States

Speaker: James Jennings, Professor of Urban Studies, Tufts University

Location: Zachs Community Room, UConn, Hartford Branch, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

**Sponsored by Urban & Community Studies, Tri-Campus; School of Social Work
Contact: Robert Fisher, (860) 570-9282
e-mail: Robert.fisher@uconn.edu**

April 28

Title: Beyond Civil and Political Rights: A Human Rights Forum on Social and Economic Rights

Speaker: Dr. Silvia M. Staub-Bernasconi, Professor at Technical University, Berlin, Germany



Silvia Staub-Bernasconi

Location: Zachs Community Room, UConn, Hartford Branch, 9:30 am - 4:00 pm

Contact: cisws@uconnvm.uconn.edu

Many other events will be held at Storrs. For a more complete list, see www.humanrights.uconn.edu, click on calendar.



**NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK
by Lynne Healy**

The international social work professional organizations have been busy developing new statements that support the universality of the profession. Two important documents are currently in draft form and it is hoped that agreement can be reached on both by October, 2004. The International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social

Workers (IFSW) will hold a joint conference in Adelaide Australia in October, 2004; final versions of a new Statement of Ethical Principles and a set of Global Qualifying Standards for Social Work Education are scheduled for presentation to the General Meetings of the 2004 conference.

Recent efforts to define what is universal in the profession of social work began with the adoption of a global Definition of Social Work by both IFSW and IASSW in 2000. The new international statement on Ethics in Social Work will replace the current version, adopted in 1994. The draft document being circulated is a set of general ethical principles, based on the belief that "it is not the role of IFSW to prescribe more detailed rules of conduct for social work in the many different countries" (IFSW, 2002, p. 1 - see website below). It does contain strong statements about commitment to human rights and human dignity and reflects principles such as self-determination, priority of client interests, and cultural diversity that will be familiar to readers of the U.S. Code of Ethics.

Perhaps more challenging is the effort, led by IASSW, to develop a set of global standards for social work education. Even the title of the draft document has been controversial; the original title of "minimum" standards was deemed inappropriate, and has been replaced by the word "qualifying," a term not very well understood in the U.S. While most educators around the world welcome a statement of global standards, others fear that this will prematurely impede efforts to develop more culturally relevant forms of social work and encourage the inappropriate use of western literature and curriculum models. Much of the debate is about the optimal level of specificity of the standards. Although intended to be a universally applicable document, the draft is lengthy and does contain quite specific language about curriculum content, resources, and structures.

Efforts to finalize the Ethical Principles and Global Standards for Education are part of the interesting process to unite social work around the world, while leaving room for expression of local needs and cultural differences. These issues are relevant to social work in Connecticut and elsewhere in the U.S. as we practice in an increasingly diverse and globalized context.

See the draft documents on the international association websites: www.ifsw.org/GM-2002/GM-Ethics-draft.html (Ethics in Social Work Statement of Principles)

www.iassw.soton.ac.uk (Click on language desired, then on Global Qualifying Standards for Social Work Education.)



UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

- 6th Biennial Conference of Caribbean and International Social Work Educators
July 28 - August 1, 2003

Barbados W.I.

<http://socsci.uwichill.edu.bb/conferences/socialwork/>

- 13th International Symposium - Inter University Consortium for International Social Development. Towards Democratic Pluralism: Challenges for Social Development in the 21st Century
December 29, 2003 - January 2, 2004.

Mumbai, India

<http://www.iucisd.org/india2003/>