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GEORGE WARREN  
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**NEXUS**  
THE PRACTICUM NEWSLETTER

*Providing news, supervisory topics and resources  
to our valued instructors in the field.*

Spring 2015

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# Diversity and Social Justice in Social Work: Empowering Students to Develop Cultural Competency

It has been a very busy fall semester. Here at the Brown School, we have been busy providing follow up and support for to our students and staff facilitating Beyond Ferguson discussions. We realize that it has been difficult for many students and field instructors. Because supervised field instruction is a critical component and is essential for the social work degree (CSWE, 2008), integration of a culturally competent model can have major implications on students entering the field in practicum. We wanted to encourage field instructors if they have not done so as yet to begin encouraging the conversation of diversity in practice and more specifically as it relates to the Ferguson situation. The students are looking to you for answers, validation and support. Although a complementary role, field instructors are different than classroom teachers as their constant interaction and presence can foster the dialogue of experience with diverse populations.

The NASW Code of Ethics (2008) has standards for culturally competent practice under sections [Social Workers Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings, Supervision and Consultation](#), and [Commitment to Employers](#). As a field instructor, it is your responsibility to support the student and encourage the student to display, discuss and practice cultural competency.

## **HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO REMEMBER:**

- Always maintain open lines of communication with your students.
- Familiarize yourself with the stressors of some students.
- Let the students know that supervision can indeed be a time to process feeling or concerns about the direction of our community.
- As with any topic a carefully chosen moment can be much more influential than an immediate challenge; (Thompson, 1998 p.217)

*Thompson, N. (1998) Promoting Equality: Challenging Discrimination and Oppression in Human Services. (Palgrave MacMillan)*

# Fair Labor Standards Act and Social Work Field Education

The Office of Field Education & Community Partnerships (OFE&CP) recently updated policy to reflect the Department of Labor Fair Labor Standards. We thought it would be useful to highlight those policies related to practica here.

In recent years, there has been a lot of discussion about unpaid practicum and internship and whether or not they were a violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Some argue that the difference in the standards also have to do with the use of the word internship versus practicum as they denote different educational outcomes. One clear difference is the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) purposeful definition that practicum being the signature pedagogy is a purposeful connection with the theoretical contribution of the classroom and the practicum world. (CSWE, 2008)

Therefore, practica is to be approached as the integration of classroom learning and applied learning, with an emphasis on the coaching, mentoring, and teaching aspect of field instruction with students. In that regard.

1. Practicum hours may not be counted as work time, nor can work time be counted as practicum hours.
2. Practica must be structured solely for the educational benefit of the practicum students and provide training to prepare the student for professional practice. It is not meant to supplant, replace, or substitute for existing employees or organizational structure of an agency.
3. Practica must be structured to meet the academic program requirements of the Brown School; and structured to attend to the professional competencies and practice behaviors outlined in the program and Educational Learning Agreement (ELA) and correspond to the student's educational level.
4. The student must be evaluated as a learner rather than as an employee.
5. The organization must ensure that the practicum adheres to the US Department of Labor regulations, including the Wage and Hour Division (Fact Sheet #71 (April 2010): Internship Programs under the Fair Labor Standards Act), which is [attached hereto](#).

The practicum site may provide a stipend. If it does so, the organization must adhere to all IRS Department of Labor and Wage and Hour Division policies and regulations.

*Please contact OFE&CP for more details about practicum at place of employment.*



## Buder Center Celebrates 24 Years

The Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies (BCAIS) promotes preparation of professionals to assume leadership positions in social services and governmental institutions dedicated to improving the lives of American Indians and Alaskan Natives. Currently, there are 19 AIAN Buder Scholars enrolled in the Brown School of Social Work who represent 14 different tribal nations. In addition to their social work education, Buder Scholars also take extra steps to ensure their work within tribal nations is impactful and positive by participating in Buder Center classes and programs.

On October 11th, 2014, the Buder Center celebrated "24 Years and 100 Graduates." Buder Center alumni joined Brown School faculty and staff for an evening celebrating 100 Buder Scholars who have graduated from the Brown School. Each alumnus has impacted numerous tribal communities and nations as alumni are located in 29 different states.

As a part of their professional development, Buder Scholars have vast opportunities to expand their education by completing their concentration fieldwork in a setting serving Indian Country. This placement can be on a reservation or with tribal, social, educational, or governmental agencies. The Buder Center has established a network throughout Indian Country to help their Scholars secure appropriate practica.

On Saturday April 4th, 2015 the Buder Scholars presented the 25th Annual Washington University in St. Louis Pow Wow.

This student-led Pow Wow is a contribution from the Buder Scholars to the St. Louis Native and non-Native community to provide a celebration of Native identity and intertribal culture. This year's theme was "Honoring Our Elders: Healing Our People through Tradition." Collectively, the combination of social work and cultural knowledge, such as leading and operating the annual Pow Wow, equips each Buder Scholar to lead tribal communities into the future.

➔ Visit [buder.wustl.edu](http://buder.wustl.edu) for more information about the Buder Center and the other upcoming events.

# Student Impact: Notes from the Field

**Aaron Beswick, MSW/MPH, 2015** | Agency: City of St. Louis Department of Health | Location: St. Louis, MO  
**Field Instructor: Jeanine S. Arrighi, MS, MPPA, Health Services Manager II**

## AARON BESWICK

### *Describe your practicum experience.*

The opportunity revolved around the review of health-related city ordinances. I also had the chance to experience the comprehensive working life of a City of St. Louis Department of Health Bureau Chief. From shepherding changes to ordinances managed by the Bureau, including coordination with the Mayor's office, to designing internal program performance management tools, to collaborating with regional experts on particular challenges related to urban air pollution, to assisting in supervising high school interns.



*Aaron Beswick*

### *What was your role as a social work & public health professional?*

The content of working tasks required identification of potential health problems and understanding the mechanism between exposures and negative health outcomes. Social work



*Jeanine S. Arrighi*

informed my investigative process, particularly within the Bureau. In my role, I worked to align my recommendations for new action with current systems and employee responsibilities based on my short, but genuine understanding of the real constraints on existing

employees. In each of my working tasks, I tried to supplement the primary goal of the work with discussions of uneven impact and unintended consequences of the intervention.

### *How did you make change happen?*

My access to high-level administrators afforded the opportunity to contribute to DOH decision-making. I considered every task delegated to me as an opportunity to influence change in the conditions that affect health in St. Louis.

*(continued on next page)*



*Jeanine S. Arrighi, Aaron Beswick, Amensissa Edossa, and Courtney Jones*

***How did this experience influence you as a professional?***

A practicum with the DOH showed me the level of coordination, management, and performance necessary to turn good ideas drafted as law into good interventions.

**JEANINE S. ARRIGHI**

***What was your primary objective with this practicum?***

While I tried to provide opportunities around the policy work of interest to Aaron, he ended up being my right hand as I toiled to gain a grasp of this bureau of 40 staff working in five programs.

***What was unique about the social work and public health perspective Aaron brought?***

Aaron's prior experience working in public housing programs and for a state legislator uniquely equipped him to be able to function effectively in the broad range of tasks he was asked to do.

***How was Aaron making change happen?***

We have not yet absorbed all the work Aaron produced and will be referring back to his research and policy writings over the next few years. Aaron laid the groundwork that another practicum student built on, which helped convince our administration to try a new approach to preparing candidates for this position.

# SAVE the DATE

Research  
Without Walls

Brown School  
Student Research  
Symposium

April 23  
3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

**Student:** Kimberly Wenz, MSW, 2014 | **Agency:** Longido Community Integrated Program  
**Location:** Arusha, Tanzania



### *Describe your practicum experience.*

I served as an organizational development intern with Longido Community Integrated Program (LOOCIP) in the Longido District of Tanzania. I worked in conjunction with the local community members to improve the organizational structure and impact within the community. The

end result was a preliminary draft of a five-year LOOCIP 'Strategic Plan' for their review and action.

### *What was your role as a social work professional?*

I worked with the administration of an international Community-Based Organization (CBO) in developing a 5-year strategic plan. Through facilitation of a community professional development class, along with the international community members, we improved sponsor relationships by coordinating and leading a volunteer service group.

### *How did you make change happen?*

Facilitating change in an international CBO can be a challenging and slow process. The greatest change I fostered

at LOOCIP was increasing community capacity by facilitating a professional development class that enabled previously computer illiterate individuals to establish fundamental computer literacy skills. This empowered 20 community members with an opportunity to have a more competitive edge as secretaries, teachers, medical professionals, students and other various professionals; providing communities members a tangible skill that could change not only their personal lives but the lives of their families and community.

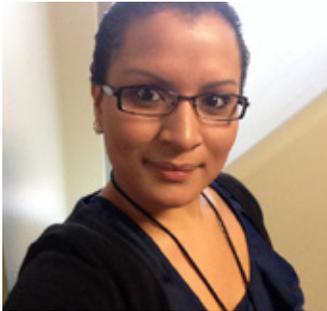
### *How did this experience influence you as a professional?*

As a professional it was wonderful seeing the impact the class had on participants' self-confidence.

Community members expressed to LOOCIP leaders in the past that they were very interested in gaining computer skills. Unfortunately, LOOCIP was unable to satisfy this request because many community members had never used computers even though computers were present in their workplace or school. I was able to provide community members with a set of skills few in the community had but that they richly desired. This experience not only gave me the opportunity to improve my Swahili skills but also network on an international level that is essential as an emerging professional breaking into the international development workforce.

**Student:** Noemi Lopez, MPH, 2015 | **Agency:** Pan American Health Organization

**Location:** Washington D.C.



***Describe your practicum experience.***

As a public health practicum student, my role was to tailor an online course curriculum that addressed chronic disease prevention to Spanish speaking countries in Latin America. The course already existed in English for

the Caribbean. The original course was a 10-week course divided into 5 modules. The one I helped tailor included a new module and the end result was a 13-week course which was divided into 6 modules and an introductory week to the course.

***What was your role as a public health professional?***

All foundation courses from the first year at the Brown School became even more valuable as I started using what I learned right away. My summer experience reminded me every day of what I had learned in Cross-cutting themes, epidemiology,

environmental health, biostatistics, research methods, etc.

***How did you make change happen?***

For the first time in my professional career, I was able to put in practice what I learned in the classroom to a project that was meant to have an impact in multiple countries. At the same time, it was the first time that my native culture and language was an asset to my project responsibilities.

***How did this experience influence you as a professional?***

My practicum experience at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) gave



me a great understanding of what it is like to be part of an international organization. PAHO is the regional office of the World Health Organization for the Americas. Now I know about the many layers of work that exist for programs to be implemented.

## Professional Development Workshops

### **Who Am I Beyond My Job: Reconnecting with Personal Purpose and Identity**

3 CEUs Friday, April 24, 2015, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Purposefully managing our careers and staying in touch with our sense of personal purpose allow us to be better prepared and more resilient in managing job change – whether small or large, voluntary or involuntary. This session will address the importance of engaging your talents and interests in ways that are consistent with your purpose, passion, and identity. Class size is limited to 25.

### **From Good Intentions to Maximized Results: Collaboration Tools for Social Service Professionals**

3 CEUs Friday, May 1, 2015, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Collaborative efforts and partnerships can pave the way for organizations to achieve more than is possible when operating alone. Using real world examples as case studies, participants will learn the essential elements of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). Practices will be shared for how a MOU or MOA can build the strength of your programs.

### **Principles of Team Building: Maximizing Staff, Volunteer and Board Impact**

3 CEUs Friday, May 8, 2015, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Most workplaces give voice to valuing teamwork, but non-profits must put this value in action if they are to maximize the impact of staff, volunteers and board members. Through this workshop, you will learn key principles of team dynamics and motivation, as applied to non-profit work settings. Examine approaches through which teams can enhance the organization's culture, climate and effectiveness. Class size is limited to 30.

We offer a 40% discount to Brown School field instructors on most Professional Development workshops. All workshops and many lectures are eligible for Missouri & Illinois Social Work continuing education units (CEUs). For complete course information and to register, visit [brownschool.wustl.edu/profdev](http://brownschool.wustl.edu/profdev).

# News at the Brown School

## OFE&CP NEW HIRE



**Jewel D. Stafford**, MSW, joined the Office of Field Education & Community Partnerships this December as an applied learning seminar facilitator - responsible for conducting Integrative Seminar, supporting students in their practica, conducting site visits and completing special projects.

Jewel holds a Master of Social Work degree from Stony Brook University. Prior to this staff appointment, Jewel served as a Research Lab Supervisor in the Division of Public Health Sciences, at Washington University School of Medicine and as an adjunct instructor at Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare.

Jewel has experience building community capacity, community organizing, and serving as a liaison between the medically underserved communities and academic institutions. Her previous experience includes engaging diverse community stakeholders, coordinating community based public health initiatives, training and supervising research teams on two consecutive subcontracts from the National Human Genome Research Institute/NIH.

## OFE&CP NEW HIRE



**Jan M. Osler**, MSW, has joined the Office of Field Education & Community Partnerships (OFE&CP) as MSW Field Site Coordinator. She is responsible for assessing and monitoring the quality of practicum experiences, coordinating and co-facilitating workshops, trainings, and presentations for students and field instructors, teaching the Integrative Seminar course, providing field advisement, and conducting site visits.

Jan holds a Master's degree in Social Work from Saint Louis University with an emphasis in the family concentration. Prior to accepting this position, Jan worked as a part-time instructor in the Human Services and Sociology departments at St. Louis Community College, Florissant Valley, and Meramec Campuses, where she taught a variety of courses and served as a practicum instructor for associate level students. Jan also served as the Human Services and Addiction Studies Program Coordinator on the Meramec Campus.

Jan has experience in program development, seminar and workshop facilitation. She has presented locally and nationally on topics such as improving cross-cultural relationships, language oppression, blended families, women's issues, and improving human services delivery systems. Jan's research and publications have focused on blended families and colorism among African-American youth. Jan is a strong believer that change starts the moment you decide to change and incorporates this message into much of her facilitation.

# FIELD EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CALENDAR

SPRING 2015

SUMMER 2015

MAY

JUNE

1 Final Evaluation of Practicum Due *(spring semester)*

2 ELAs due *(summer semester)*

8 **\*\*Session 6:**

Evidence Based Practice  
and Field Instruction  
*Brown School*

15 Commencement

18 Summer Semester Begins – First Day of Classes

18 Practicum Registration Due *(summer semester)*

## Office of Field Education and Community Partnerships Staff

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## FIELD INSTRUCTOR (SUPERVISION) REQUIREMENT:

At the Brown School, foundation-level students must be supervised by an affiliated field instructor who holds a master in social work (MSW) degree. At the concentration-level ONLY, students in practicum, might be supervised by an affiliated field instructor who holds an MSW and/or a related master-level degree.

## Follow us on LinkedIn:

Brown School  
at Washington University  
in St. Louis

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