

## Sociology & Social Work Newsletter

### Letter From The Chair

Well, two years have passed since my last letter to you. Once again, I want to thank our students, staff, and faculty for their cooperation, support, and patience over the past few years. Without their support, I do not think I would have survived. Particular thanks go to Kooros Mahmoudi for his service as acting chair during my absence last spring. He and the staff, Caprice Schneider and Debbie Bell, did an outstanding job keeping the department on track.

Our department continues the tradition of serving students with a variety of courses delivered by a cadre of excellent teachers. Although Phyllis Schiller has retired, we have added two new faculty members. Dr. Yvonne Luna teaches Introduction to Sociology, Race and Ethnic Relations, and Social Stratification. She also serves as the coordinator for the sociology internship placement program. We were able to secure Dr. James Reed's position as lecturer, and he continues to teach a wide range of courses for us, including the Research Methods component. Though not new faculty, Dr. Janine Minkler has become a new tenured member as she was promoted to Associate Professor of Sociology last spring. Janine also serves as the new graduate coordinator, as Karla Hackstaff returns to full-time teaching/research activities.

On the Social Work end of things, Rebecca Garrison has taken over the position of coordinator of the program, and Mary Damskey is now the coordinator for Social Work Field Placement. The Yuma Social Work Program continues to grow, with William Pederson coordinating and mentoring students there.

Our faculty and students continue to maintain an active research agenda. You will read about various research accomplishments in this newsletter. Members of our faculty have books in print, and most have either paper presentations or articles appearing in refereed journals. A large contingent of students presented papers at the Pacific Sociological Association in Oakland, California, this past spring.

We have added a new page to our web site: "*Where are they now?*" This is devoted to e-mails, letters, and messages we receive from former students. E-mail the department at [ssw@nau.edu](mailto:ssw@nau.edu) to let us know where you are and how you are doing. Also, send along any suggestions you may have for improving our program(s) or this newsletter, and anything else that may cross your mind.

Until next year, take care and drop us a line when you get a chance.

Warren Lucas  
Department Chair



## Alumni Updates

### Social Work & Spanish Studies Send Senior to South America

Rikki Ruben, a senior social work major and Spanish minor, will travel to Chile this summer for a program pairing volunteers with abused and abandoned Chilean girls at a local shelter in Santiago, the capital.



The Young Women's Mentoring Program is offered by the international organization, Volunteer Adventures. Ruben will mentor girls aged 3 to 18 who have been neglected or mistreated by their families.

The 21-year-old from Phoenix will help with schoolwork, assisting staff in organizing the girls' study time, planning recreational activities and just spending time with and listening to the girls.

"I've always felt a draw toward helping the helpless," Ruben said. "Because I've been so incredibly fortunate in my own life, I think it's my responsibility to offer my time and help to those in need—especially young people."

### "Where Are They Now?"

Please e-mail us with your updates. We are interested in knowing what you are doing. [ssw@nau.edu](mailto:ssw@nau.edu)

### Inside This Edition

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## Notes from the Graduate Coordinator's Desk

Janine Minkler

Greetings! A vibrant group of new graduate students joined our program this year, bringing with them a range of experiences and interests. Sociology of Religion and Race and Ethnic Relations have been two main areas of interest, and many have decided to obtain their Ethnic Studies Graduate Certificate to augment their degrees.

Twelve of our graduate students went to the Pacific Sociological Association (PSA) meetings in Oakland, CA, and offered inspiring and insightful presentations at the conference. Students and faculty attended a practice PSA session here, where several graduate students had the opportunity to fine-tune their presentations. We have enjoyed making this practice session an annual traditional.

Recent graduates completed many innovative theses and internship manuscripts, including these:

**Sara Berscheit**, "Northern Arizona Native American Suicide Prevention and Awareness Campaign: A Sociological Internship Experience."

**Patricia Bigwood**, "United States Oppression of Nineteenth Century Women: African-American Women Sustaining Family During Slavery."

**Jennifer Billesbach**, "Variables Influencing Native American High School Dropout Rates Within Community, School, Family, and Individual Ecologies."

**Tina Eyraud**, "The Effect of World Banking and Trading Policies on Social Resources in Developing Countries."

**Elizabeth Foley**, "High-Achieving Mexican American Women: A Break from Tradition."

**Meghan McCaffery**, "A Needs Assessment Process: On Starting a Performance Improvement Plan."

**Brigid Wagner**, "Coconino County Health and Community Services: An Internship Experience in Program Evaluation and Case Management."

Finally, I would like to congratulate the following students on their graduation: Patrick Crowley, Robert DiCarlo, Matthew Duthie, Alexa Grochocki, James Severin, Marie Sheneman, Therese Tupper, and Kiki Valdez.

## Undergraduates Honored at Ceremony

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences held its 2007 Undergraduate Scholarships and Awards ceremony on April 20 at the du Bois Center. Janine Minkler and Becky Garrison served as our department's award presenters. Congratulations to all.

SCHOLARSHIPS	Student
Vicki K. Brown Memorial Scholarship	Christopher Griffin
Vicki K. Brown Memorial Scholarship	Jaymie Lopez
Kanan Family Endowment	Madeline Kent
Virginia Rae Kurner Memorial Scholarship	Kourtney Gutierrez
Marie Adell Monbleau Memorial Scholarship	Jaymie Lopez
Sociology Faculty Scholarship	Candace Linn
Edward E. Walker Sociology Scholarship	Alicia Fawley

HONORS	Student
Outstanding Social Work Senior - Flagstaff	Emily Harris
Outstanding Social Work Senior - Flagstaff	Ashleigh Watkins
Outstanding Social Work Student - Flagstaff	Gregg Whitehat Jr
Outstanding Social Work Senior - Yuma	Angelina Garcia
Outstanding Social Work Student - Yuma	Stephanie Pla
Outstanding Sociology Senior	Teresa Sedano
Outstanding Sociology Senior	Elizabeth Miller
Outstanding Sociology Senior	Shannon Marcus
Outstanding Sociology Student	Paul Morgan
Outstanding Sociology Student	Tricia Zadina
Outstanding Sociology Senior (BAILS)	Vera Baron

SBS Scholarship	Student
Janie and Jeff Biddle Memorial Fund	Crystal Duarte

## Department Earns Academic Excellence Award

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) recognized the Department of Sociology and Social Work with an academic excellence award in Washington, DC, in March 2006. David Berns, director of Arizona Department of Economic Security, nominated our department for "Outstanding Education and Training in the Field of Human Services."



### Papers

Minkler, J. "Is Responsible Development Sustainable? The Case of Cave Creek, Arizona." *International Journal of Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability*, Vol.

2 (3), 2006, pp.13-20. [http://ijs.cgpublisher.com/product/pub.41/prod.155].

Minkler, J. 2006. "Book Review: Buried by the Times: The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper, by Laurel Leff." *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal*. Vol. 1(3), Winter.

## Sara Alemán Named Director of Ethnic Studies

Sara Alemán, a professor of sociology and social work, will become the new director of Ethnic Studies in August. She replaces outgoing director Geeta Chowdhry, who will return to teaching political science full time.

Alemán, who joined the faculty in 1997, has served as a coordinator for the gerontology program and director of the Faculty Development Office. She has been active on the Commission on Ethnic Diversity, the Ethnic Studies Steering Committee and the University Curriculum Committee. In 2001, she received the President's Award for faculty and academic professionals.

Alemán "has been dedicated to diversity issues before and since she's arrived at NAU," said Kooros Mahmoudi, interim dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. "I have total confidence in her to do a good job and complement the work that was previously done by Dr. Chowdhry."



## Social Work Program

This has been a year of milestones and change for the Social Work program. Four of our graduating seniors were recognized by the university for their achievements and contributions. Angelina Garcia (Yuma Campus), Rachele Hines, and Nicole Norris (Flagstaff Campus) earned the prestigious University Golden Axe Award. Stephanie Pla (Yuma Campus) was recognized by the NAU Alumni Association with the Social and Behavioral Science College Distinguished Senior Award.

Our number of graduates this year more than doubled from last year. We celebrate the graduation of 15 students from our second cohort at the Yuma campus and 37 students from the Flagstaff campus. This year our social work students contributed 30,700 clock hours of service in agencies and communities throughout Arizona and southeastern California. Our mission to provide professional social work education for indigenous populations of the Southwest is reflected in the number of our juniors and seniors of Native American (20%) and Latino/Hispanic (26%) heritage.

In December 2005, after a 25-year career with the social work program, Dr. Phyllis Schiller retired. We have missed her energy, vision, and leadership. In the fall, our own Dr. Sara Aleman will assume the position of director of ethnic studies. Our joy and congratulations for Sara are mixed with tears and a sense of loss. We shall miss her thoughtful, calm, and wise presence in our program, and we celebrate her achievements and contributions as a colleague. We look forward to continued collaboration with her in her new position.

None of our accomplishments this year would have been possible without the dedication, inspiration, passion, energy, and contributions of our students, field instructors, advisory board members, community agencies, and faculty working together to meet the professional social work needs of northern and southwestern Arizona and southeastern California.

Becky Garrison, Coordinator

Social Work Program

"In my years at NAU, I came to view the sociology faculty as not just my professors, but also as my mentors and friends. Because of this, I have now been accepted into a top-tier program in sociology to pursue my PhD."

■ ■ ■ Paul Morgan, Class of 2007

## Faculty Profile

Kathleen Ferraro, Professor of Sociology  
*Neither Angels nor Demons:  
Women, Crime, and Victimization*  
Kathleen Ferraro  
Northeastern Series on Gender, Crime, and Law



A provocative study of the complex relationship between domestic violence and women's crime.

Kathleen Ferraro's book will be the subject of an author-meets-critic session at the upcoming meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems in New York City. She will also present a paper, co-authored with Neil Websdale: "Thy Will Be Done: The Role of Faith in Christian Women's Response to Domestic Violence."

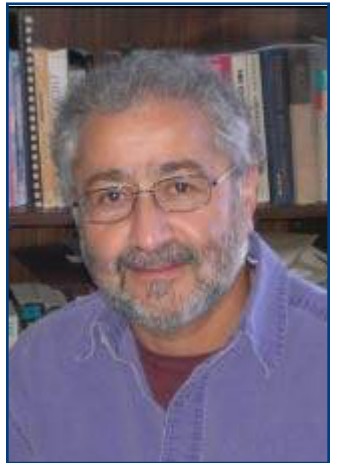
Ferraro published an article with her former doctoral student, Angela Moe, titled "Criminalized Mothers: The Value and Devaluation of Parenthood from Behind Bars," in *Women and Therapy*, Volume 29, Numbers 3/4, 2006, pp. 135-164.

Selected as a member of the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, she is incoming chair of their Lee Founders Award Committee. She also serves on the Justice 21 editorial board that selects and publishes accessible summaries of the latest scholarship on social problems to distribute to policy makers and activists. This year, she was appointed as an editor of the journal *Violence Against Women*, and she continues to serve on the editorial board of VAWNET, an online clearinghouse for scholarship on violence against women.

Ferraro has worked closely with battered women in the anti-violence against women movement.

## Interim Dean Appointed for SBS

Sociology Professor Kooros Mahmoudi was named interim dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences in December.



"Dr. Mahmoudi was recommended to me by many individuals in SBS who view him as someone with strong leadership ability who can serve the college and university during this critical period of transition," Provost Liz Grobsmith said.

Mahmoudi came to the university in 1981. He served as chair of the Department of Sociology and Social Work from 1990-1994 and directed its graduate program from 1986-1990. He received a bachelor's of science degree, a master's degree and a doctorate in sociology from Utah State University. He won the university's Teaching Scholar Award for the 2002-2003 academic year.

Outgoing dean Kathy Cruz-Urbe recently accepted a position as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at California State University, Monterey Bay.