We are Making WAVES

Columbia School of Social Work
transforming: individuals, communities, the world
INFOGRAPHICS

2–3 Poverty-Related Studies
4–5 International Research
6–7 Global Firsts
8–9 Clinical Faculty
10–11 Tenured Faculty
12–13 Ph.D. Employment
14–15 Curriculum Choices
16–17 Student Life
18–19 Alumni Leadership
In the era of Big Data and data visualization, we have been mining information on our School to determine the impact of our faculty, students, and graduates on the wider world over the past five to ten years. The results include the nine infographics shared in this special issue of *Spectrum*, dedicated to how we are “making waves” in so many ways.

We have known that members of our faculty are doing groundbreaking intervention research on multiple dimensions of poverty-related issues that bear significant implications for the nation and the world. But now we appreciate more than ever how many of them are deeply engaged in far-reaching investigations, scholarship, education, and service. And our strength and breadth in clinical social work and the three other methods (policy, social enterprise administration, and advanced generalist practice and programming) are a noteworthy source of pride.

The data indicate how our School is building its capacity to help transform the future. We have tenured 11 next-generation scholars and are preparing students who have incomparable opportunities to customize their studies—in a wide range of specializations from social enterprise administration, which the School first introduced some 40 years ago, to clinical practice in newly emergent areas like complicated grief. In all, students have more than 28 different specializations available, with the intellectual capital of Columbia writ-large to tempt them because they are part of its vibrant community.

Many of our Ph.D. graduates hold positions in top-ranked universities. A large number of our alumni have started their own NGOs/NPOs. Many have risen to leadership positions in recognized institutions.

We are making waves . . . and we have our faculty, alumni, students, and staff to acknowledge for their passion, creativity, intelligence, productivity, and resolve.

*Jeanette C. Takamura*

Dean and Professor
The Social Intervention Group (SIG), led by Wilma and Albert Musher Professor Nabila El-Bassel, advances evidence-based, sustainable solutions to HIV, substance use, violence, trauma, and related issues affecting vulnerable populations through research, education, training, policy, and community partnerships. Inspired by our Central Asian alumni, the Global Health Research Center of Central Asia (GHRCCA) was formed to address the needs of migrants, sex workers, and other populations at high risk for HIV and substance use in Central Asia. Professor El-Bassel and her team of scholars—including Associate Professors Louisa Gilbert, Susan S. Witte, and Elwin Wu—have published hundreds of scholarly articles, received numerous National Institutes of Health and other external funding awards, and won acclaim worldwide for their work.

Half of our faculty members are engaged in grant-supported poverty-related studies, in the United States and around the world.

As the oldest social work school in the country, the Columbia School of Social Work has been a pioneer in addressing the root causes of poverty. From the 20th century on, the School conducted studies of the welfare, education, health, housing, and other systems critical to improving the lives of poor people, especially in the United States.

In recent times, our faculty members can be credited with advancing poverty-related research from an evidence-based, multidisciplinary perspective, analyzing its political, social, economic, and public health dimensions. In addition, they have broadened the focus of their studies to include countries around the world.
Associate Professors Robin E. Gearing, Michael MacKenzie, and Craig S. Schwalbe have combined their expertise in mental health, juvenile justice, and child welfare in a UNICEF-funded project to develop services for youth in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Community-Family Integration Team (C-FIT) project provides therapeutic support to foster care and diverts delinquent adolescents from detention center placements. Both programs, family foster care and diversion, are the first of their kind in the Middle East.
AFRICA
• Botswana: Mental health interventions for those living in the midst of Africa’s HIV/AIDS crisis, by Drs. Denise Burnette and Ellen P. Lukens.
• Nigeria: Study of infant mortality by Dr. Neeraj Kaushal.
• Uganda, Kenya, and Nigeria: Dr. Fred Ssewamala’s series of studies on the developmental impact of microfinance initiatives on AIDS-orphaned/affected youth.
• Zambia: Qualitative study of mental health problems of survivors of torture and genocide, by Dr. Lynn Michalopoulos.

ASIA
• China (including Hong Kong & Taiwan): Professor Ada Mui’s studies of social gerontological theory, research and practice.
• Hong Kong: Breast cancer awareness training for health professionals by Dr. Mary E. Sormanti.
• Malaysia: Research on sexual risk behaviors among fishermen in Kuantan, Pahang, by Professor Nabila El-Bassel.
• Taiwan: Research on the low rates of utilization of psychiatric treatment, by Dr. Fang-pei Chen.
• Pan-Asia: Research on organizations that serve immigrants, by Dr. Marcus Lam.

CENTRAL ASIA
• Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan: NIMH-funded clinical trials to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic, led by Professor Nabila El-Bassel with the participation of faculty members Louisa Gilbert, Susan S. Witte, and Elwin Wu.
• Mongolia: NIMH-funded evaluation of a microfinance intervention for high-risk women, by Drs. Susan S. Witte, Fred Ssewamala, and Marion Riedel.

SOUTH ASIA – INDIA
• Study of the impact of India’s National Old Age Pension Scheme on elderly well-being, by Dr. Neeraj Kaushal.
• Studies ranging from the psychological well-being of older adults in Mumbai to the feasibility of a family-based HIV-prevention intervention for rural Indian youth, by Dr. Denise Burnette.

EUROPE
• Spain: Critical examination of the role played by health service providers in the Spanish National Health System, by Dr. Rogério M. Pinto.
• England: Cross-national comparison of racial and ethnic disparities in low birth weight in England and the United States, by Dr. Julien Teitler.
• England: Research on settlement houses, by Dr. Barbara Simon.
• United Kingdom: Study of the Labour government’s success in reducing the child poverty rate, by Dr. Jane Waldfogel, resulting in Britain’s War on Poverty (Russell Sage, 2010).
Two-thirds of our faculty members are engaged in international social, economic, and health research and education. This map shows some examples.

Many of our faculty members have been at the forefront of Columbia’s global mission. Within a premier international research university, they are bringing social work values and knowledge to bear on global challenges such as poverty, unemployment, homelessness, abandoned children, HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, juvenile justice, and other social issues. CSSW was among the first schools within Columbia to embrace the University’s Global Centers, beginning with Amman, Beijing, Istanbul, Mumbai, Nairobi, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, and Santiago. Several of our scholars have achieved world renown for their multi-national research on social, economic, and health and mental health issues. Professor Irwin Garfinkel is a leader on comparative social welfare policy; Professor Jane Waldfogel, on policies related to maternal and child well-being. Professor M. Katherine Shear collaborates with her counterparts in other countries to ensure that research-based interventions are employed with persons beleaguered by complicated grief.
We are a school of global firsts: first to institute research centers in Central Asia and a major development center in Africa; the only social work school to have begun an NICHD-funded population center; and the locus of the first-ever university-based center for complicated grief. These are in addition to ten existing centers that are already part of the School.

Of the 37 population research centers funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the Columbia Population Research Center is the only one to have been founded within a school of social work.

Columbia Population Research Center

CO-FOUNDERS/DIRECTORS: Mitchell I. Ginsberg Professor of Contemporary Urban Problems Irwin Garfinkel and Professor Constance A. Nathanson of Columbia’s Mailman School of Public Health

SIGNATURE RESEARCH AREA: Children, youth and families: e.g., studies of the effects of welfare and child support policies on child and family well-being, by Professors Irwin Garfinkel, Neeraj Kaushal, Ronald B. Mincy and Jane Waldfogel.

NEWLY RELEASED: Findings on the relationship between worsening economic conditions and harsh parenting, using the dataset from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study.

International Center for Child Health and Asset Development

DIRECTOR: Dr. Fred Ssewamala, Associate Professor
HEADQUARTERS: Uganda and New York
FUNDING/SUPPORT: National Institutes of Health, Columbia University, and private foundations
MISSION: To further the rigorous research and service programs led by Dr. Ssewamala over the past decade, which aims to combine youth-focused economic empowerment through savings-led asset building interventions with health and developmental programming, targeting poverty-impacted and HIV/AIDS-affected children, youth, and families in sub-Saharan Africa.
LATEST INITIATIVE: Funded by two Columbia University grants, the Center is conducting two studies on the developmental impacts of savings interventions on youth in Kenya.

This year Columbia University approved the establishment of the International Center for Child Health and Asset Development (ICCHAD) within the School of Social Work, in recognition of the importance of its work toward empowering HIV/AIDS-impacted children, youth, and families in sub-Saharan Africa.
Global Health Research Center for Central Asia

LEADERSHIP: Willma and Albert Musher Professor Nabila El-Bassel and Associate Professor Louisa Gilbert

LOCAL LEADERSHIP: CSSW alumni from the region, whose graduate studies at CSSW were sponsored by the Open Society Foundation

FUNDING: National Institutes of Health

HEADQUARTERS: Almaty, Kazakhstan, with branch offices in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, as well as regional representatives in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

ACHIEVEMENTS: Seven externally funded projects and ten completed studies related to developing interventions for segments of the population at high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, and other STIs.

The Center for Complicated Grief

DIRECTOR: M. Katherine Shear, M.D., Marion E. Kenworthy Professor of Psychiatry

FUNDING: National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH)

ACHIEVEMENTS: Creation of a pioneering 16-session complicated grief treatment, tested through a prospective randomized controlled trial; more than 100 papers on complicated grief-related topics.

LATEST INITIATIVE: A year-long “train the trainers” program for 20 experienced clinicians with experience training other therapists.

Over the past several decades, the AIDS epidemic has spread at an alarming rate throughout Central Asia. Our Global Health Research Center for Central Asia (GHRCCA) was established in 2007 to address the region’s social and health problems through multidisciplinary research, education and training, and policy and dissemination.

Our School has the world’s first university-based center on complicated grief, a condition that occurs when the natural adaptive response to bereavement stalls. The Center for Complicated Grief, established in early 2013, improves the lives of people with this debilitating condition through a comprehensive program of outreach, education, training, and research.

Dana Alonzo
Associate Professor
Special interests: Latinas, suicide, depression, risk behaviors
Population: Adolescents

Michelle S. Ballan
Assistant Professor
Special interests: Disabilities including autism
Population: Disabled

Denise Burnette
Professor
Special interests: Mental health, health, aging
Populations: Elderly and children

Leopoldo J. Cabassa
Assistant Professor
Special interests: Mental health, health, health disparities, policy
Population: Latinos

Anne Conway
Associate Professor
Special interest: Cognitive development and processing
Population: Children

Ronald A. Feldman
Ruth Harris Ottman Centennial Professor for the Advancement of Social Work Education
Special interest: Human behavior and the social environment
Population: Adolescents

Robin E. Gearing
Associate Professor
Special Interests: Mental health, adherence to treatment
Population: Adolescents

André Ivanoff
Associate Professor
Special interests: Dialectical Behavior Therapy, suicide
Population: Imprisoned persons with serious mental illness

Rick Greenberg
Lecturer
Special interests: Learning disabilities, impulse disorders
Populations: Youth, adults, parents, and families

Richard Hara
Lecturer
Special interests: Cultural competence-oncology, end-of-life, domestic violence
Populations: Cancer patients, caregivers
Half of our full-time faculty and close to half of our part-time faculty are experts in clinical practice, each with their own area of specialization.

Clinically trained social workers provide an estimated 65 percent of all mental health services in the United States. Our School has noteworthy strength in rigorous, evidence-based clinical practice. Many of our clinical faculty members have international reputations and are the recipients of prestigious awards. They have a wide range of specializations: from treating complicated grief (Professor M. Katherine Shear) to developing new interventions for adolescents at risk of suicide (Dr. Dana Alonzo) to addressing treatment non-adherence among mentally ill youth (Dr. Robin E. Gearing). They also serve a range of populations, from Latinos (Drs. Dana Alonzo, Leopoldo J. Cabassa) to the disabled (Drs. Michelle S. Ballan, Rick Greenberg) to the imprisoned (Drs. André Ivanoff, Craig S. Schwalbe). Supplementing our full-time clinical faculty is an array of adjuncts with high professional standing and specialized expertise in particular fields of interest to our students, such as couples therapy, veterans’ mental health, and foster care services.
Eleven scholars have been tenured over the past ten years, nine of whom are at the School forming a critical core of multidisciplinary researchers in social policy, practice, administration, and research.

The tenure process at Columbia University is widely known for its rigor. Thus, we are proud of the eleven scholars who have earned tenure over the past ten years at Columbia. Their numbers include academic stars such as Maurice V. Russell Professor Ronald B. Mincy and Marion E. Kenworthy Professor M. Katherine Shear. This past year two more leading scholars joined their ranks: Drs. Craig S. Schwalbe and Elwin Wu.

Previously at CSSW:
Dr. Vincent Guilamo-Ramos (2007)
Dr. Wen-Jui Han (2008)
Our doctoral graduates have been appointed to positions at ranking U.S. social work, public health, and medical institutions. This map shows examples from the past five years.

Our Ph.D. program is highly competitive. Once accepted, our doctoral students are mentored by some of the most innovative and productive scholars in the country. It is no surprise that students who are recruited to assist in faculty members’ cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research find they have an advantage when seeking positions in academia or as researchers/administrators in government or nonprofit organizations.
Our curriculum offers four methods and seven fields of practice for a total of 28 options with matching field placements. There are also four minors and nine dual degrees.

MINORS
1. Law
2. Business Administration
3. International Social Welfare
4. Public Policy & Administration
DUAL DEGREES WITH OTHER COLUMBIA SCHOOLS

1. Columbia Business School – **M.B.A.**
2. Mailman School of Public Health – **M.P.H.**
3. Jewish Theological Seminary – **M.A., Jewish Studies**
4. Columbia Law School – **J.D.**
5. Union Theological Seminary – **Master of Divinity**
6. Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation – **M.S., Urban Planning**
7. School of International and Public Affairs – **M.P.A.**
8. School of International and Public Affairs – **M.I.A.**
9. Bank Street College of Education – **M.S., Education**
Jasmine Wynn (M.S.’13) and Cameron Rasmussen (M.S.’13)
Reason for joining: JW: I already had a B.A. in criminal justice and knew I wanted to continue working on these issues. The caucus was one of my reasons for choosing CSSW. CR: My involvement in the Men’s Caucus in my first year got me interested in working with incarcerated fathers. Reading The New Jim Crow was another catalyst.

Criminal Justice Conference: JW: The centerpiece of the caucus’s work is the criminal justice conference held every spring. Helping to organize this conference was life changing. My favorite part was hearing the stories of the formerly incarcerated and the work they are doing now. CR: It was great to be able to leverage Columbia’s resources and prestige to put on such an important event. For the restorative justice panel, we had four people in the room, all doing powerful work, who had not met before. And on the last day, we brought together students from across the city to form a city-wide student coalition, which is still active.

Level of commitment required: JW: The caucus required around six extra hours each week, which increased as the conference approached. But when you’re passionate about something, the drive within you pushes you each day. It also helps to be surrounded by students who are willing to work together to reach a common goal. CR: Making time is tough. Part of it is about priorities and whether your life circumstances allow you the time to invest in work outside of class and field.

Main benefits: JW: As a result of my caucus activity, I am an even bigger advocate of change, have a better grasp of the issues, and have a much wider network. I think I’m also a better social worker. CR: I was able to engage with professors and the community in ways I may have not otherwise. And I’ve just now landed a job as project manager for the Columbia University-wide Criminal Justice Initiative.

Black Caucus

Joel Livingston (M.S.’14)
Reason for joining: At orientation, I met with some of the caucus representatives, and was amazed at all the great things they do. I ended up serving as Vice President, and this year, I am President. Caucus mission: It’s important for students of color to have more of a voice at CSSW. We also strive to give back to the Harlem community. Last year we started up the BC Rising Star Scholarship for a graduating 8th- or 12th-grade student in Harlem.

Upcoming events: A community-wide cleanup with some Harlem middle-school students; a purely social trip to Atlantic City; and a Kwanzaa celebration.

Alumni mentoring: We plan to match current students with BC alumni who are pursuing careers in similar fields.

Black Graduation: Every year we have a dinner, a keynote speaker, an alumni speaker, and performances. At the end, there is a presentation of the graduates.

Main benefit: I am more outspoken now than ever before on issues of race, power, and privilege, which helps me to advocate for my clients facing similar problems.
Student life at our School is enriched by a 23-member student union, 21 caucuses, a student journal, and a host of other activities.

All professional social work education programs require field education to provide valuable real-world experience, and ours is no exception: our students annually contribute more than half a million service hours as interns to tri-state and other communities. What is exceptional is how many of our students choose to hone their leadership and other skills by participating in the wide array of activities our School has to offer. The students featured here are just a few of our many student leaders.

**Student Union**

**Eric Jones** (M.S.’14), President
**Reason for getting involved:** Being an African American male and having a learning disability, I wanted to prove to myself and others that people like me are capable of dynamic leadership. I also wanted to be involved in the planning of my graduation and other activities related to my final year of study.

**Most important functions:** Promoting an inclusive environment by supporting student activities; working with faculty and administrators on school-wide concerns.

**Time commitment:** Honestly, being a part of SU is not too stressful. We meet once a month, sometimes twice. We work as a team to make sure we take care of each other.

**Chief benefit:** I see the SU as a kind of career development resource. The skills you develop can be applied to practically any work setting.

**Asian Pacific Islander Caucus**

**Sohee Kim** (M.S.’14)
**Reason for joining:** I wanted to be part of an API community on campus and was happy to find others who felt the same way. It’s a supportive space and gives the School’s API population more of a voice.

**Caucus mission:** Our caucus sheds light on the multiple barriers—poverty, mental illness, and lack of adequate healthcare—faced by many Asian ethnic groups.

**Typical activities:** We organize panels and other events around the issues of adoption, immigration, and mental health. We want to do more on the latter in the coming year. It’s important for social workers-in-training to understand the stigma associated with mental illness in many Asian families.

**Time commitment:** Being active in a caucus takes up time. It helps that there are four of us who divide up the responsibilities.

**Key benefits:** As a Korean American, I’ve learned so much about myself through conversations with fellow caucus members. Greater self-knowledge makes me more competent in interacting with my clients as a professional. Another benefit has been the chance to extend my network within the larger NYC social work community.

**Latina/o Caucus**

**Estrellita Alvarado** (M.S.’14)
**Reason for joining:** Being Latina, I value family and culture. The caucus helped me transition from Arizona to NYC and Columbia University. It’s my family away from home.

**Caucus mission:** The caucus grew out of an initiative to start a bilingual graduation ceremony. We wanted to ensure that our families, who mostly don’t speak English, could celebrate our successes. Many of us are the first in our families to pursue higher education.

**Typical activities:** Films—last year we screened one about the struggle of transgender Latinas in the Bronx—and discussions of immigration issues.

**Time Commitment:** You have to dedicate around ten hours a week. Time management is crucial, but it helps that I can collaborate with fellow classmates. I highly encourage incoming students to get involved.

**Anticipated benefit:** Leaving CSSW knowing I contributed to bettering the community.
Frank Cohn, M.S.’06
Career: Founder and Executive Director, Global Potential; nonprofit management consultant; teacher.
Typical day: A combination of fundraising, partnership development, staff training, support, and facilitation with youth and community participants.
Last week I coordinated a conference in rural Haiti for 200 local youth leaders from 25 villages and urban slums. Then I traveled to NYC for a day for a staff meeting and did a stopover in Istanbul to run leadership training for 250 educators. I also had to squeeze in time for my non-profit management consulting and my teaching, since I am a volunteer Executive Director.

Best CSSW memory: A debate with Dr. Ssewamala about the nature and motivation of international community development.
Benefit of attending CSSW: The School provided me with powerful connections both within and outside my field. I also appreciated serving as a member of the Student Union. The idea for the organization I ended up founding was originally developed as a project within a program planning class.
Advice to students: Use any and all opportunities while at CSSW; attend all lectures, workshops, brown bag lunches, caucus events, CUPID meetings, and conferences; meet as many new people as possible. And if you don’t like something...change it!

Lucy Cabrera, Ph.D.’00
Career: 24 years as President & CEO of the Food Bank for New York City
Best CSSW memory: The day the chair of my dissertation defense committee, Professor Steven Schinke, announced I had successfully defended my dissertation.
Worst memory: I don’t believe I got more than five hours of sleep a night during the four years.
Reason for choosing CSSW: I was already working at the Food Bank and felt strongly that a Ph.D. would help me strengthen its work. That instinct proved to be accurate.

Greatest career achievement: Built a strong research and social policy department at the Food Bank, based on what I’d learned through my Ph.D. studies.
Advice to students: Never stop learning. Stay current on events and policies that impact social issues and issues of not-for-profit management/governance. If your ambition is to head an organization, expand your network. Join associations. Build a strong network of service providers and public sector leaders. And expand your skill base to include fundraising, human resources, labor laws, board development, marketing, and of course budgeting and financial planning. You don’t have to be an expert in any of these areas but learn enough to understand them.

Alexandra Butler, M.S.’10
Career: Full-time writer and poet
Greatest challenge: Continually shaping my memoir on caregiving from an aerial view so that it can remain a personal story with universal applications.
Best CSSW memory: The many hours I spent in the beautiful library and all the lively class discussions.

Worst memory: Stats class, unfortunately.
Benefit of social work training: Columbia vastly improved my writing skills and broadened my perspective on both humanity and the self. I was also able to reframe my own care-giving experience.
Advice to students: Don’t feel bad if you have other talents aside from social work. Find ways to combine your social work education and your other interests to find your own special place in the world. I believe that every writer could benefit from a social work degree and every social worker should know how to write well. Stories are immensely powerful tools for changing the world.

Over the past decade, scores of our alumni have started up their own enterprises or risen to the pinnacle of their chosen fields.
From the moment our students set foot on campus, they are offered a wealth of resources to help identify and focus their career goals. Those resources cover all aspects of social work: clinical, public policy, community organizing, corporate consulting, government, and civil society. That said, our goal is not simply to help our students get jobs but to develop their skills as leaders. The alumni profiled here are exemplars of our School’s cherished leadership ideal.
Tessa Horst, M.S.’06
Career: Founder of Infant Growth Group, a practice providing dyadic therapy to young children at risk for developmental delays, and their caregivers.
Most gratifying moments: The successes experienced in my direct practice work—for example, when a mom becomes reflective about her parenting for the first time.
Best CSSW memory: The first day of my second year: I knew exactly where I was going and felt as though I belonged.
Benefit of social work training: Four letters: A.G.P.P. (Advanced Generalist Programming and Practice). I’m so grateful for the combination of skills I learned in grant writing, program design, and direct practice.
Advice to students: Take at least an hour a week to reflect and create a space for personal and professional growth. Most perceived barriers start from within. Slow down enough to hear your own inner voice (intuition).

Yossi Korazim, D.S.W.’83
Career: Former head of the Policy-Planning Department at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Israel; currently a professor at the John Wesley Theological College, School of Social Work, Budapest, Hungary, and a senior lecturer at the College of Management, School of Behavioral Science, Rishon LeZion, Israel.

Charles E. Lewis, Jr., Ph.D.’02
Career: President of Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy
How he got there: My Ph.D. is in social policy analysis, but as an older graduate, I could not find a permanent position at a university or think tank. I eventually found my niche on Capitol Hill, where I had the opportunity to create the Congressional Social Work Caucus and now an institute, CRISP, to complement the caucus’s work. As CRISP president, I work on bringing social work research to bear on policymaking at the federal level.
Best thing about CSSW: Having the opportunity to study with some of the best minds in the world: e.g., Irv Garfinkel, Sheila Kamerman, Marcia Meyers, and Alfred Kahn.
Advice for other doctoral students: Make all the sacrifices necessary to ensure that you give your best. Don’t be afraid to knock on your professors’ doors. And enjoy the entire Columbia experience. It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Alexis Miesen, M.S.’04
Career: Co-founder and proprietress of Blue Marble Ice Cream and its nonprofit, Blue Marble Dreams, which opened up an ice cream shop in Butare, Rwanda, called Inzozi Nziza (“Sweet Dreams”).
Coming soon: Sweet Dreams, a feature-length documentary about Inzozi Nziza, by award-winning filmmakers Rob & Lisa Fruchtman.
Typical day: As a small business owner, you have to be prepared to wear many different hats, sometimes all at the same time. It can be exhausting. But it’s also a great mental exercise, helping me to master every aspect of my business.
Best CSSW memories: I remember loving all of Fred Ssewamala’s classes. He had such an animated way of teaching. I also got to meet Bill Clinton at my field placement!
Benefit of social work training: Being a good leader is about understanding people. Social work trains you to see and understand context and its influence on people’s behavior. And keeping a business fresh and current—especially in a competitive market like NYC—involves constant needs assessment. And then there’s the evaluation piece: is this working? Finally, I view businesses as members of communities. We don’t just exist to take money from our customers. We must make a contribution. This is very much a social work-minded approach, but it’s also good business.
Advice to students: Entrepreneurship is a fantastic way to make a difference. There’s so much room to be creative and do good in the private sector. And take a basic accounting course! I didn’t and had to learn everything the hard way.

Jenna Tutjer, M.S.’06
Career: Executive Director of CSSW’s Achievement Initiative, which partners with Harlem high schools to provide dropout prevention programming.
Most gratifying moment: I enjoyed writing the grant proposal to the New York State Education Department’s Liberty Partnership Program.
Best CSSW memory: My second-year field placement. After being assigned to one of my top choices, I ended up being reassigned to an internship helping out over-age and under-credited students who had dropped out of high school and were trying to get back on track. The change, though unwelcome, proved fortuitous. This experience was what ignited my passion for working with struggling high school students and creating unique programming to meet their needs.
Benefit of social work: I chose social work as a career because it’s so versatile. You can find social workers in just about every agency, organization, and business across the world. I love that CSSW is one of the few institutions that recognizes this and offers multiple tracks, from policy to clinical and everything in between. Every single one of my classes in the Advanced Generalist Practice and Programming (A.G.P.P.) track prepared me for my career: needs assessment, grant writing, program development and evaluation, as well as the clinical classes in adolescent and school-based topics.
Advice to students: Find your passion. Don’t settle. Don’t be afraid to make your own path and create your own job. Your dream job may not exist yet. So, go make your dream job. Take advantage of trainings and other professional development opportunities. Don’t be afraid to step up and take on a project that may feel a little too big for you. It will push you professionally. Take an interest in every person you meet. You never know when they will open a window or door. And again, don’t settle. You only have one life, so make the most of it.
As we go to press, news is breaking of exemplary leadership by faculty and students on several fronts:

- Associate professor Julien Teitler, who is involved in research activities in Vietnam, has received funding from Columbia University’s provost for his groundbreaking work in setting up a global network of scholars focused on the health consequences of migration worldwide, using the Columbia Global Centers network as a platform. He shares that honor with Sandro Galea, professor and chair of the epidemiology department at the Mailman School of Public Health. The two scholars are working under the aegis of the Columbia Population Research Center, based at CSSW and the School of Public Health. There were nearly 90 submissions from across Columbia that competed for support.

- Doctoral student David Burnes was selected by the Association of Gerontology Education in Social Work (AGESW) to receive the 2013 Doctoral Student Leadership Award.

- Second-year student Aline da Fonseca is one of three students awarded a $27,500 Lemann Foundation-endowed scholarship. The Brazil-based foundation is committed to the advancement of social change in Brazil. Ms. da Fonseca was selected by the Columbia University Office of the Provost from a pool that included applicants from, in addition to CSSW, the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Mailman School of Public Health, the Graduate School of Journalism, and the Graduate School of Architecture, Preservation and Planning.
Columbia School of Social Work (CSSW) has been a leader in social work education and research since 1898. It joins rigorous academic theory with real-world practice to enhance the welfare of citizens and communities in New York City, the nation, and around the world.

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