School Social Work
UIC has been at the forefront of helping youth discover their potential, connect to their community and secure their academic future.

Also Inside:
Justice Matters at the Center for Social Policy and Research
Giving a voice to marginalized individuals and populations

Managed Care Partnership
Partnering with UI Health to serve more than 25,000 patients

Global Connections
Expanding mutually beneficial international partnerships
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The University of Illinois at Chicago Jane Addams College of Social Work carries forward the mission of Jane Addams and the Hull-House movement, adapting them to the realities of today’s urban environments.

Our mission is to educate professional social workers, develop knowledge, and provide leadership in the development and implementation of policies and services on behalf of the poor, the oppressed, racial and ethnic minorities, and other at-risk urban populations.

We are one of seven health science colleges at UIC, advancing an interdisciplinary approach to addressing health inequities.
From the Dean

Partnering with community groups to advance social justice causes and address community needs is a part of the tradition at the Jane Addams College of Social Work. While our way of working is something we take for granted and rarely mention, it becomes more salient when we look at recent national events.

Preparing for, and recovering from, the natural disasters that took so many lives and destroyed so much property rested on people caring about each other and working together to literally “weather the storm.” In stark contrast are the brazen public acts carried out to intimidate and instill fear among different racial and ethnic groups in Charlotte and other places, and the “alternative facts” and divisive rhetoric that are becoming the new norm for advancing any cause or personal agenda.

In the midst of these events and major societal changes, we express our concern and support for the families and communities affected by the hurricanes and earthquakes, and we continue to seek ways to have greater impact and positive influence in the communities we serve on a daily basis. This issue of Affirmations presents some of those stories.

The feature story focuses on our school social work concentration, its unique qualities and the ways school social workers impact students, schools, and communities. The relationships we are building with university colleagues in Costa Rica and India and our partnership with UI Hospital and Health Sciences System are presented next. The last story covers the Justice Matters initiatives undertaken by the college’s Center for Social Policy and Research. These initiatives are distinguished by their inclusion of prisoners, former prisoners, and prisoners’ families in dialogues and discussions about criminal justice policies, programs, and system reform. While the topics differ, these stories of community engagement and partnership share a common social justice goal.

As always, thank you for your support of the college, our faculty, staff and students, and the work we do here. I’d love to hear from you and welcome your call, email, or campus visit.

Sincerely,

Creasie Finney Hairston, PhD
Dean
“Twenty percent of children in school may be struggling with a mental health issue, and 80% of those students will not get mental health treatment outside of school.”

Clinical Assistant Professor Annette Johnson, who heads the MSW concentration in school social work, presents such statistics to highlight the growing need for social workers in schools.

“Many people have underestimated the amount of support that is both needed and being provided in schools,” she adds. “Schools are second only to young peoples’ homes for where they spend most of their time, so schools are the most likely place where these problems will be identified.”

Annette is in a good position to know about this. Before joining the college, she worked for nearly 25 years in Chicago Public Schools (CPS), 18 of those years as director of social work. It was during her time with CPS that she began to understand how many school age children are dealing with issues of mental health.

Social and Emotional Learning

The college’s school social work program is founded on the understanding that social workers need to care for the whole individual, not only a single aspect or only for the near term. In the context of school social work, addressing students’ short-term academic performance is important, but we emphasize their long-term social and emotional development, both to deal with mental illness and to develop skills and resources they’ll need to be successful beyond middle school or high school.

A unique aspect of the college’s school concentration is the use of Critical Service Learning (CSL) as a primary technique for social and emotional learning. CSL is a strengths-based approach that empowers students to identify their own inherent strengths, and then apply those strengths in a community-based service project.

CSL is an integral part of the school social work curriculum. In their internships at schools throughout the Chicago metropolitan area, second year
Schools are second only to young peoples' homes for where they spend most of their time, so schools are the most likely place where mental health problems will be identified.

MSW students implement a CSL project with the young people on their case load. For example, one MSW student worked with a group of young people who had lost someone to gang violence and had been identified as at-risk of becoming gang members. For their CSL project, the group created a public service awareness campaign to address the issue of gang violence in their community. To assess how the project improved their social and emotional wellbeing, the youth were given a social responsibility assessment before and after undertaking the project; the average pre-test score was 4.0, and the average post-test score was 5.5, demonstrating a dramatic increase in overall social responsibility.

A Systems Level Approach

Another defining aspect of the college's school concentration is the emphasis on the macro and mezzo, as well as the micro levels of social work. The needs of the individual student are the primary focus, but school social workers must maintain a larger perspective to mitigate what may be impairing the student.

School social workers are called upon to wear many hats. They connect students to resources within the school, but also in the larger community. They must engage the student's parents, and perhaps even their siblings. They may sit on leadership committees, or they may provide services to teachers and staff to help them deal successfully with students.

Clinical Assistant Professor Julie Fisher, who facilitates the post-MSW PEL program, recalls that when she was a school social worker she worked with local merchants whose stores students passed after school, to ensure that what those merchants displayed was appropriate for young students. "The footprint of a school social worker can go far," she observes.

In addition, we train social workers to keep an eye on developments in policy at the local, state or federal levels. To help school practitioners keep up with developments, we issue a yearly School Social Work Policy Practice...
Brief. This year’s brief focused on Illinois Senate Bill 100, which amends school codes relating to disciplinary action with students.

Training Social Work Professionals Working in the Field

Another point of distinction for the JACSW school social work program is its focus on helping working professionals to remain current and advance in their profession.

The Training Institute for School Social Work Professionals is an annual day-long conference with a different focus each year. The 2017 institute was entitled “Successful Strategies for Meeting Students’ Mental Health Needs.” It was attended by more than 120 social workers, educators and other professionals from throughout Illinois and from neighboring states. The event featured a keynote presentation and six workshops on topics such as the impact of exposure to trauma on students, effective interventions for working with ADHD, and a strengths-based approach to engaging students with autism.

Similarly, the Post-MSW PEL (Professional Educator License) program prepares social work professionals to become eligible for the ISBE PEL School Social Worker Endorsement application process. It is one of few PEL programs that offers coursework entirely online, which is a benefit to working professionals.

Keeping an Eye on the Future

Part of the college’s approach is to get in front of trends as they’re developing, produce a model for implementation, then share it with as many practitioners as possible.

For example, Annette Johnson envisions a time when service agencies will provide ever more services directly in schools. “This is not new,” she says, “but it’s happening more and more. And principals aren’t trained for that, they don’t know how to do that. So, we’ll have to prepare our students to have more leadership qualities, so they can better coordinate with the agencies and school administrators to better serve youth.”

“We’ll also be preparing our students for how to function in different political climates,” she adds. “For example, how immigration issues and policies impact schools and students. And this gets directly to the heart of the Jane Addams mission of achieving social justice.”

The program also strives to stay current with technology. Julie Fisher uses a blog as part of her online PEL program, and this semester will begin using Skype to confer with PEL students and their internship supervisors, “because that’s where students are now, and we always have to be ready.”

It will also be important to understand differences in students who are coming into the MSW program. Younger generations will have different attitudes and expectations, and different ways of looking at ethics and society. “Our social work curriculum must be prepared to meet the students, understand where they are and where they’re coming from, and be able to take them to a different level,” Johnson observes.

“It will always be important to address the changing needs of our MSW students,” she says, “so they will be prepared to meet the changing needs of youth in our schools, as well as in the community.”
The school social work faculty at JACSW have over 90 years of combined experience working “in the trenches” in Chicago Public Schools.

The JACSW program was one of the first to recognize the importance of social and emotional learning and integrate it into the curriculum, and helped create the momentum for the development of SEL in curricula throughout the country.

It is the only school social work program to emphasize Critical Service Learning as a core component.

The program maintains relationships with more than 250 schools in the Chicago metropolitan area.

The Post-MSW PEL program is one of few such programs that offers coursework entirely online.

The Training Institute for School Social Work Professionals helps those working in the field to stay current with new developments in social work theory and practice.

JACSW School Social Workers in the Field

Jasmine Beamon, MSW ‘08

Jasmine has worked as a school social worker in Chicago Public Schools since she graduated in 2008. For the last four years, she has worked as both a social worker at the Murray Language Academy in Chicago, and as a lead who supports other social workers in the school district. The biggest challenge she sees is the chronic need for more school social workers. “We have about 1,000 schools in the district, but only about 320 social workers.”

To help her tackle this wide range of responsibilities, she says she keeps in mind the training she received at JACSW. “What stuck with me the most is remembering that while our primary responsibility is students who have IEP’s, we must also serve the other students, the parents, the teachers, and the school administrators. We’re there to serve the whole school.

“School social workers are the model for social skills and behavior in the schools, and we have to remember the hearts and minds of the entire school community so that we can be a model of supportive behavior. And I know many other Jane Addams graduates who think and feel the same way!”

Aubrey Thornton, MSW ‘14

Aubrey works for The Menta Group at an alternative high school and transition program. She uses Critical Service Learning (CSL) projects with teens and young adults in Chicago, and at other school locations across Illinois and Arizona by using Google Hangouts. She says, “The commitment to project-based learning from my collaborating teachers, administration, and other social workers has led to the implementation of CSL at schools throughout the organization.”

To date, Aubrey’s students have completed five CSL projects, and each time they’ve shown growth in self-determination, leadership and initiative. “The students find that they are actually more interested in their community than they thought,” she reports, “and they ask to continue their project even after the project’s timeline has ended!

“I am so thankful that the Jane Addams College of Social Work prepared me with such an effective intervention that allows school staff to be educators of academic, as well as social, emotional and life skills.”
Global Connections

The college’s partnerships and connections with social workers and institutions around the globe provide mutually beneficial exchanges.

JACSW Professor Serves as Fulbright Specialist in India

In summer of 2017 Professor Alice K. Butterfield served as a Fulbright Specialist for the new social work program being developed at Assam Don Bosco University (ADBU) in India. Professor Butterfield has expertise in the development of MSW programs from her similar experiences in Ethiopia, and she presented several lectures and workshops to students and faculty on topics surrounding Asset-Based Community Development. Since returning, Dr. Butterfield has shared with our faculty what she learned in India about grassroots community development. She has also continued working with ADBU faculty, helping facilitate scholarly publications and working with them on community projects for impoverished children and homeless people with mental illness. The college will be seeking opportunities to develop further exchanges with ADBU.

Collaboration with Universidad Latina de Costa Rica

In August, 2017 we hosted a group of 40 students from the School of Social Work at the Universidad Latina de Costa Rica (ULatina). Professor Rosa Anais Chan, the director of the ULatina social work program, said the students were intent on visiting Jane Addams College to learn about our social justice mission and our work with disadvantaged and marginalized communities. They listened eagerly as faculty members presented their recent research regarding child welfare and the effects of violence on youth. The students engaged in discussions with our faculty and asked many questions about social justice in Chicago and the U.S. During the visit, Dean Hairston and Professor Chan met to discuss a cooperative agreement to facilitate future faculty, student and community exchanges between the two schools.

Chicago Sister Cities International Social Services Exchange

In June, 2017 we hosted a welcome luncheon at Jane Addams Hull-House Museum for 40 delegates from the Chicago sister cities of Birmingham (UK), Casablanca (Morocco), Durban (South Africa), Hamburg (Germany), Osaka (Japan), Paris (France) and Shanghai (China). The delegates were on campus to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first social services exchange hosted in Chicago, and to attend a conference on the theme of “Diverse International Approaches to the Prevention of Violence & Abuse.” Conference goals focused on addressing social challenges faced by cities around the world and expanding cross cultural collaboration. Presentations and workshops by social workers, educators and colleagues in the social and behavioral sciences provided immense professional development and networking opportunities.
MANAGING CARE for 25,000+ High-Risk Individuals

The college is partnering with UI Health to deliver services to persons with chronic health conditions in underserved Chicago communities.

In response to the State of Illinois shifting its Medicaid population to a managed care model, University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System (UI Health) has partnered with Illinois Blue Cross Blue Shield to provide managed care services to its many patients. And they’ve asked Jane Addams College of Social Work to assist.

Expertise in Community Outreach

The college’s Central West Case Management Unit (CWCMU), part of the Jane Addams Center for Social Policy and Research, has developed considerable expertise in doing outreach, conducting phone screenings and providing case management to thousands of elderly residents on Chicago’s West Side.

Because of that expertise, UI Health asked the CWCMU team to partner with them in reaching out to more than 25,000 UI Health patients to determine their health care needs. Some have been identified as high risk because of chronic illness or mental health issues, or because they have been seen in the emergency room.

The team first tries contacting patients by phone, to see if they have unmet needs. They perform a telephonic Health Risk Screening and, if necessary, connect the patients to a care coordinator who can link them to services.

If they are unable to reach a patient by phone, they conduct field-based outreach. Team members hit the streets to locate the patient, or search for them on social media. They leave no stone unturned to connect them to the services they need.

Addressing Health Inequities in Chicago Communities

The target area for this outreach effort lies primarily within Cook county, and mostly in neighborhoods on the West Side of Chicago, home to many marginalized communities. The CWCMU team has great familiarity with these communities and a history of community engagement there. They are starting with an initial case load of 22,000, but that will likely expand to include as many as 28,000 patients.

This care coordination approach is an efficient way of linking people to services without unnecessarily burdening the health system. It also addresses health inequities in underserved communities by ensuring that health needs are being met. The overall goals of the program are to improve health plan performance and health care quality, and to improve outcomes for these individuals.

About the partnership with CWCMU, Rani Morrison, Senior Director of Care Continuum at UI Health, said, “Thanks to the leadership of Vice Chancellor of Health Affairs Barish and Dean Hairston, UI Health is leveraging the ability of the college of social work to offer unique services and out-of-the-box offerings that can support not only our patients, but others in the years to come. As a social worker myself, it makes me very happy to have this partnership in place!”
“We effect social change as it relates to those who are or who feel powerless in the criminal justice system, in at-risk communities and populations, and in the arena of public health.”

This is how Joseph Strickland, associate director and senior researcher at the Jane Addams Center for Social Policy and Research, sums up the Center’s work in social justice. “We do this in very practical ways,” he adds, “through active partnerships between the university and the community.”

Including the Expertise of the Community

At the heart of how the Center tackles social justice issues are partnerships with organizations and individuals from the community. “That’s what makes us different,” says Strickland. “We’re not simply taking evidence-based practice to the community and saying ‘you should do this.’ We also find what’s working in the community and bring that back to scholars and practitioners, so it can be built into best practices.”

“There are few advocacy groups for prisoners. That’s why it matters that their voices are included, that their voices are heard.”

Community members are full participants in Center projects, to ensure that their voices are made part of the discussion. And in the area of criminal justice reform, which is a strong focus at the Center, that means including former prisoners and the families of current prisoners. “Prisoners have no lobby group to act on their behalf,” Strickland says. “There are few advocacy groups for prisoners, and even fewer with former prisoners in their leadership. That’s why it matters that their voices are included, that their voices are heard.”

Giving Former Prisoners a Seat at the Table

One of the most effective ways the Center has found to amplify the voice of people who are often not heard by policy makers, is to literally bring them together at one table.

For example, in May of 2017, the Center convened a Summit on Reentry, Reintegration and Aging. Participants included the Assistant Director of the Illinois Department of Corrections, an
at the Jane Addams Center for Social Policy and Research
Illinois Parole Board member, leadership from many community-based organizations, researchers, former prisoners and family members of current prisoners. The unique perspectives and expertise of all participants were brought to bear on the issue of assisting older prisoners in reentry and reintegration into the community.

Follow-up summits will focus on policy reforms and program changes. Listening Sessions, in which community leaders and policy makers hear and respond to former prisoners describing their reentry experiences, will be a prominent feature of those summits.

In similar fashion, the Center’s event Transforming Justice: Mobilizing Incarcerated Mothers & Young Women Through Community Action brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including young women who were formerly incarcerated. Among the active participants was Juliana Stratton, an Illinois State Representative who has championed legislation addressing the needs of female prisoners.

“To often the good work being done at the community level can be negat-ed by policies enacted at higher lev-els, policies that are well-meaning but sometimes counterproductive in their effect,” Strickland observes. “We need to ensure that policies support what’s happening on the ground. Working si-multaneously at the community level and the policy level, that’s how social justice will be achieved. That’s why what we’re doing at the Center really matters.”

To illustrate how such events can lead to policy changes, at the Center’s 2017 Summit one of the issues discussed was the use of risk assessments in jails and prisons. Such assessments are intended to determine prisoners’ eligibility for release. One concern voiced at the Summit was that certain assessment criteria may not accurately represent the current individual, e.g., criteria such as prior criminal background or whether or not a family member has been involved in a crime. The Center and its community partners are now meeting to examine and better understand the efficacy of assessments to ensure that people do not remain incarcerated because of the erroneous appearance of being high risk.

Using Film as a Tool for Advocacy
Documentary films are a powerful me-dium for introducing viewers to people, situations and ideas that they may not experience in their own lives. Recognizing this, the Center has started producing documentary films as part of its

A Voice from the Formerly Incarcerated

Nasir Blackwell, a formerly incarcerated citizen, now works at the Inner-City Muslim Action Network in Chicago, coordinating their Green ReEntry program which helps re-turning citizens successfully reac-climate to their communities. He helped draft Senate Bill 2282, the Removing Invisible Bars Bill, which protects individuals on parole from being rearrested for associating with others on parole while engag-ing in community efforts.

Nasir participated in the 2017 Summit On Reentry, Reintegration and Aging. About such events he says, “The Summit was very fruitful, especially when I had the chance to talk to Assistant Director Gladys Taylor from the Illinois Department of Corrections. That she was willing to sit at a table with us and have this conversation speaks volumes for the future direction of IDOC.

“I appreciate that Jane Addams Col-lege is having these types of events, where formerly incarcerated individuals can sit at the table with policy makers and administrators from IDOC, and we’re collaborating on bringing real solutions to what we all see as being the problem.”
mission to give voice and visibility to marginalized populations.

A matter of growing importance in criminal justice is the aging of U.S. prison populations, which raises many issues of healthcare in prisons. To address this problem, the Center’s social documentary developer Edgar Barens directed the Academy Award-nominated film *Prison Terminal: The Last Days of Private Jack Hall*.

The film documents a prisoner-staffed hospice program at Iowa State Penitentiary, where prisoners provide end-of-life care to fellow inmates pass away with dignity. As a passionate advocate for such programs, Barens has presented the film at organizations and institutions around the country and around the world, including over 50 U.S. prisons and correctional facilities.

“The prisoners shown in my film defy stereotypes that I think are commonly held among the free population,” Barens says. “And when the film is shown inside of a prison, the prisoner’s voices can speak directly to other prisoners, as well as to prison staff and administrators, to raise awareness of the growing need to provide end-of-life care inside prison walls.”

His most recent prison screening was at California’s San Quentin State Prison, noteworthy for having the largest death row population in the U.S., though executions have not been performed since 2006. The screening was specifically for a prisoner group who call themselves Brothers Keepers. The group was originally established to prevent inmate suicides, and they are now working to adopt and implement a hospice model similar to that featured in the film.

**Disseminating Knowledge to Advance Social Justice**

The Center regularly publishes and makes freely available the results of its initiatives, whether that be the findings of research inquiry or an action plan created during a community dialogue.

Center publications are posted on the college’s website, distributed on social media, and used in classrooms with students. “But, the biggest impact comes from sharing this information with community leaders, policy makers and practitioners,” says Strickland. “These are the people who really need to see it. They are the ones who can really effect change. And that’s truly what matters at the Center.”

**Center Publications**

The Center has published a monograph on how community agencies can better address the needs of returning prisoners and their families.

You may download this and other publications from our website.
Doctoral student Sussany Beltran has a history of working with older populations. She has been a care coordinator, a nursing home social worker, and a director of social services at a nursing home. It was in that role that she saw the need for increasing people’s participation in advanced care planning.

For her dissertation at Jane Addams College of Social Work, she will examine hospice and end-of-life care utilization among terminally ill Latinos. Susanny received a pre-dissertation fellowship from The Gerontological Society of America’s Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work.

Why are you getting a doctorate?
I always knew I wanted to do research. I sort of “fell into” working with older adults, but once I got my MSW and started working in the field, I realized that I loved it. Coming back to get my doctorate to improve gerontological social work practice just made sense.

What made you choose the doctoral program at Jane Addams?
I’m from South Florida and moved to Denver after my MSW. I loved Denver, but within months I knew that it wasn’t a permanent place for me. I wanted to do my studies in a diverse, urban setting and at a school where faculty research focuses on the most disadvantaged groups.

Please tell us a little more about your dissertation.
It deals with decision-making at the end of life. I will be doing interviews with terminally ill Latinos who are eligible for hospice care to learn how they make decisions about end-of-life care, including accepting or rejecting hospice. I want to know how their values and beliefs related to death and dying influence their care decisions, and how those who reject hospice are supported at end of life.

What led you to this line of research?
Working in nursing homes, I noticed a pattern in terms of those who had advanced care plans and those who considered different options for care.

At times, the administration also discouraged me from having discussions about hospice with families because they assumed that they would not want hospice or would get upset. I want to make sure that all older adults have access to care options that minimize suffering.

You worked for a year at the college’s Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center. Did that connect with your dissertation?
Not directly. I helped develop interview questions for focus groups, conducted focus groups, and analyzed qualitative data and developed reports. For example, we developed an education needs assessment for use in Latino communities in the south suburbs, then performed data analysis on the findings. However, I will use those techniques for my own dissertation work.

After you get your doctorate, are you planning to go into academia, public administration, or some other area?
I plan to go into academia. This semester I’m teaching my first class here at the college, and I’m loving it. But, my passion is really research, so I hope to end up somewhere that offers a good balance between research and teaching. I want to pursue a research agenda that has real-life impact on social work practices with older adults and on the care available to them.

What challenges do you think you’ll face in that area?
I’m really passionate about bringing more attention to the older adult population, which is growing rapidly, and their needs. I think older adults are often forgotten, and many students don’t consider working with this population. So, even though there is a great need for people to focus on older adults, the tendency is for younger people to not want to.

What advice do you have for those considering getting their PhD in social work?
Get some work experience first. My work experiences really helped me zero in on the practice problems I’m passionate about solving. Work experience can also help in the classroom, having that experience to draw from in teaching. And you need to have at least three years of experience to teach practice courses at an accredited college. If you have work experience, let that be your guide—find the practice problems that light a fire in you.

Is there anyone in social work that you particularly admire or who guides your work?
There are a lot of people currently doing gerontological research whose work I really admire. I see their work and I think, “that’s the kind of work I want to do,” work that has a real world impact for older Latino populations. That really inspires me!
Alumnus Bill Coats has always been involved in community health and other community-based efforts. While a student, he volunteered in the Chicago neighborhood Ravenswood and eventually became co-director of the Emergency and Outpatient Programs at Ravenswood Hospital. Later, he was director of the Jackson County Health Department in Oregon, and he helped establish the first Mental Health Court in Illinois. Bill was also an adjunct professor at Jane Addams College of Social Work, where he taught Community Practice, Mental Health Policy, Health Systems, and Social Work in a Multicultural Society. In 2014, Bill was awarded the college’s highest honor, the Jane Addams Pioneer Award.

What originally drew you to Jane Addams College?
A primary motivator was my mother, who was a social worker. She admired Jane Addams and often told me about her work in social justice.

What is your favorite memory of going to school at JACSW?
Learning systems theory in my second year research class. That’s a little geeky, I know, but it helped me sift and unify our field’s basic practice model.

Much of your career has been involved in community and mental health. What role does social work play in community health?
Today there is a major trend in social work practice to become ever more aware of the interface between social work and public health theory and practices. The two have in common a focus on public policy that targets the reduction of harm, early intervention and treatment of community, family and individuals.

How do you think social work has changed over the years?
Since the medicalization of the field in the 70s, social workers lobbied for and got licensure, so we can get paid through insurance. This has very much changed the field toward clinical. There was an era of great involvement in mental health and community development. But we moved to more of a prevailing medical model, which brought more systems thinking. More recently, though, there has been a realization that the settlement house approach works, and of community-based participatory research, which amalgamates many aspects of practice that is more congruent with our mission.

What do you think is the biggest challenge in social work today?
We are seeing a major shift away from inter- and intrapsychic practice models to more ecological and neurological models with “holistic health” and “wellness” goals. Another trend, that has resulted in the medicalization of our practice, is that we can become licensed to provide “best practices” services. Yet, we’re seeing the emergence of new theories and practices that harken back to more inductive practices, that are being designed to work from the specific needs of neighborhoods, families and individuals.

You’ve recently been volunteering on a new project here at the college?
I have been asked by Dean Hairston to facilitate the development and implementation of the new Building Community Partnerships project. The college has a number of faculty with experience in the Community-based Participatory Research model. Through the use of these methodologies, I see an opportunity to further the college’s mission, that is based in a fundamental and passionate commitment to work for the betterment of communities. The times have compelled me and many others to again bear witness to our professional values through taking action. Therefore, I am honored to join with the college, as we are joining with other UIC departments for the purpose of forming effective long-term partnerships with community-based organizations committed to our mutually held values.

What led you to do this?
This is a great opportunity for me to continue utilizing my social work experience in a facilitative way, rather than in clinical or administrative roles. It will also allow me to continue working with bright younger professionals from whom I learn and keep up with new and exciting trends in practice. These practices speak to what I have always hoped we could bring forward from the best of the settlement house, the community mental health and public health practices. And it’s a way for me to give back to the college that helped me get started in social work.

What advice do you have for young social workers?
As soon as you can, accept that you will never know what is best for or what might happen to others; you can learn by watching, to see what does really happen. We are never going to know the full consequence of our actions but we can take measured and mindful effort to support positive change.