
By Olubunmi Oyewuwo-Gassikia (Bunmi)

In April, I had the opportunity to travel to Istanbul, Turkey for the first time. Of course, in typical PhD student fashion, it wasn’t all for leisure (although I did get lots of leisure in!). Aslihan, my fellow 2011 cohort-er (you know, part of the best cohort ever to walk the halls of JACSW), told me about a conference on religious counseling and care, and I submitted an abstract and was accepted. I was both excited and nervous to go, and I am so glad that I went. Not only was it great to spend time site-seeing and eating my way through the beautiful city of Istanbul with a wonderful friend, it was also professionally enriching.

Even before the conference started, I got a taste of what social work education and practice is like in Istanbul, and how this is influenced by the political context of the country. Aslihan arranged for me to give a guest lecture to the BSW students at her university on domestic violence and the services provided for Muslim women in the United States. I was initially concerned about how it would go – my audience being BSW students and the majority of the audience not being English speakers made me worry that my ideas would not come across well. I gave the lecture in English while Aslihan translated it, and I talked about many of the concepts I discuss in my dissertation, such as intersectionality. It was an amazingly transformative experience! The talk lead to a fruitful discussion on domestic violence, intersectionality, and how to address the social issue in the Turkish context.

Continued on page 3

Who’s Who

**Doctoral Committee Reps**

**Who:** Caitlin O’Grady and Andrew Repp

Email Caitlin and Andrew with your questions, concerns, and ideas for the Doctoral Program Administration

Contact info: cograd5@uic.edu and arepp3@uic.edu

**Jane Addams Student Government (JASG) PhD Liaison**

**Who:** Judith Rocha

Judith will keep us updated on what JASG has going on. You can also email her with ideas, concerns, and questions for the Jane Addams College Administration

Contact info: jrocha2@uic.edu
Who’s Who (continued from page 1)

Brown Bag Co-Chairs
Who: Judith Rocha and Suhad Tabahi
Judy and Suhad help to plan events during the semester including guest speakers, professional development, and writing retreats. Be on the lookout for emails with upcoming dates and events! Have a suggestion? Send it their way!

Contact info: jrocha2@uic.edu and stabah2@uic.edu

Doctoral Dispatch Newsletter Editor
Who: Susie Beltran
For the next newsletter, send Susie your accomplishments, updates, important dates you want to share, and if you would like to contribute an article to the newsletter!

Applause & Accomplishments

**Program Progress**

**Linda Campos-Moreira** successfully defended her dissertation “Latinos Attending Highly Selective Universities: The Role of Ethnic Identity” chaired by Dr. James Gleeson (2/22)

**Ian Jantz** successfully defended her dissertation “Multimorbidity at Midlife: An Analysis of Morbidity Patterns and Life Course Socioeconomic Cofactors” chaired by Dr. Sonya Leathers (3/07)

**Anjali Fulambarker** successfully defended her dissertation “Police Response to Intimate Partner Violence: Influences on Decision-Making” chaired by Dr. Amy Watson (3/14)

**Quenette Walton** successfully defended her dissertation “The experiences of Depression Among Middle-Class African American Women: A Mixed Model Study” chaired by Dr. Sonya J. Leathers (3/04)

**Publications**


**Presentations**

Amana Mbise presented “Child Trafficking, Child Labor and Slavery: A Non-European Perspective” at the Danish Institute for Study Abroad (DIS), Copenhagen

Caitlin O’Grady presented “Religiosity, Mental Health, and Substance Use Among Latino Adults” at the 20th Annual SSWR Conference

Andrew I. Repp presented “Gender, Race, and Veteran Health Care Utilization” at the 20th Annual SSWR Conference

Judith Rocha presented “Predictors of Depression in Latina Mothers of Youth and Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: An Overview of Baseline Data for a Health Promotion Intervention” with Dr. Magaña at the 20th Annual SSWR Conference

Suhad Tabahi presented “Perceptions of the Arab World on U.S. Relations: An Examination of Attitudes Towards U.S. Foreign Policy and the American People” at the 20th Annual SSWR Conference

**Professional Development**

**Robert Aspholm** accepted a faculty position at Southern Illinois University

**Anjali Fulambarker** accepted an Assistant Professor position at Simmons College (starting fall 2016)

**Amana T. Mbise** gave guest lecture titled “Qualitative Research Methods with Children and Youth” at DIS

**Quenette Walton** started a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the UCLA Center for Health Services and Society

Your accomplishments deserve our applause! Share your great work by emailing sbeltr2@uic.edu
Eat. Pray… (Continued from page 1)

The BSW student cohort had their introduction to social work class later that day. In that class had recently learned about social work with children and families. To complement the lesson, that day, they were going to visit a children’s home. Aslihan and I tagged along. When we got there, one of the social workers, who is an adjunct faculty member and had attended my talk earlier in the day, described the work that he does with children in the home, how children end up there, and some of the issues he faces in practice. Then the students went on a guided tour of the home. Aslihan, the professor who teaches the course, and I also received a tour. We met with the director of the home and were able to meet some of the children who stay in the home. The living quarters were bright, warm, and inviting, and the children all seemed so happy and well taken care of. At the same time, I also felt myself becoming emotional – I had never visited a children’s home or orphanage. In addition, hearing the social worker’s experiences and learning some of the reasons that children become orphaned further saddened me. It is amazing to me that in all my time as a social worker, I had never been to such a practice setting even in the US. I think that the educational experience of visiting actual practice sites – not just having guest lectures or field placements - is extremely powerful. I think most of us can attest to the fact that we had no idea what practice would be like or what the practice setting would even look like until we had our field placements. The visit raised my awareness of the issue of child welfare, and also made me self-aware of the fact that could not work in such a setting and with this population. It would be too difficult, and possibly traumatic, for me.

And yes, I did actually attend the conference! It was a great learning and networking experience. I attended lectures in both English and Turkish (we had translators!) and I met wonderful people. Aslihan’s longtime friend presented on her experiences as a social worker and challenges around addressing clients’ spiritual and religious needs. I also met one of my academic crushes, Dr. Wahiba Abu-Ras. Aslihan and I sat with her for over an hour absorbing her advice on how to survive and navigate post-PhD life. I also had a great conversation with a professor from New York who does work around bridging connections between the mental health profession and religious communities to create a holistic model of care. We spent lunch talking over the epistemological assumptions of the model (yes, I geeked out!!). My presentation also went well and was well attended. And of course, I ate. I had a great time.

I loved my trip to Istanbul because I was able to have a great time with Aslihan and her family. I also loved the trip because it reignited my love for social work. I think being in the PhD program and focusing on one idea for so long can sometimes make us lose sight as to why we entered the profession of social work in the first place. Something had to make us love it so much that we had to get a PhD in it, right? Over the past few years, I had lost the true root of my motivation. Going to Turkey and engaging with students and with people doing similar work make me so excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. I think there is so much we can do, but it can be easy to lose our passion being bogged down by the hurdles just to cross the PhD finish line. The anxiety about milestones and the constant worry that we’re not good enough can really kill our drive. For me, Turkey will serve as an anchor – as I’m pushing through this final stage of the dissertation, when I feel discouraged or hopeless, Turkey will remind me of the possibilities out there and why I am doing what I am doing. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to travel half way around the world to have figured it all out.
Important Dates

May 30, 2016 - CampusCare Waiver Deadline. Memorial Day Holiday (College Closed)
May 12 to August 5, 2016 - Weekly WriteON sessions and Workshops hosted by the Graduate College. Please e-mail Benn Williams at bwilli7@uic.edu to RSVP
June 13, 2016 - Summer Instruction Begins
June 24, 2016 - Last day to apply online for summer 2016 semester graduation
July 4, 2016 - Independence Day Holiday (No Classes)
July 15, 2016 - Last day to drop courses with college permission and receive a grade of “W” on transcript
August 3, 2016 - Summer Instruction Ends
August 4-8, 2016 - Summer Final Examinations
TBD New Student Orientation

Know of a conference we should know about? Email the information to sbeltr2@uic.edu

Is there a specific book or resource that has helped to inspire you and keep you going through your PhD journey? Please share the title/author and a brief summary for the next edition of the newsletter!
E-mail sbeltr2@uic.edu

GOOD TO KNOW . . .

Where do I get business cards?

Students can place an order using the Publications Services, on-line ordering, www.uicprint.uic.edu.

Click on "online order"
Click on "stationery"
Click on either "Order Campus Stationery" or "Order College Stationery"
Click on "Order business cards"
You’ll be asked to sign in. If this is the first time using the Publications Services, you’ll need to establish an account
Note: In the "special instructions" section indicate that you would like to order 100 black and white student business cards for $12.50.

Enter "9" in the fields that require the C-FOPAL account numbers and an invoice will be e-mailed to you
You can pick up your business cards at Publications Services, B-4 Student Center West, 828 S. Wolcott. You can pay with a check or credit card at time of pick up. Or you can contact the financial services after they receive the invoice.

Questions? Call (312) 996-3562