

November Monthly Report

School of Social Work

Overview

The School of Social Work remains active in the university and community for the month of November. On November 3rd and 4th, the School co-hosted “Staying Awake: Resistance Dominance and Mobilizing Hope” a liberation based healing conference which focused on multiple areas of diversity. Chancellor Mimms-Devezin welcomed approximately 80 participants from around the country who attended the meeting, which was held in the conference center. The conference topics covered areas that informed participants about the complexity of diversity in the context of power based on race, class, gender, ethnicity and gender orientation. The experiences of African-Americans, Latinos, Pacific-Asian Islanders and transgender were a few of the topics covered. The school also supported and promoted Dr. Clyde Robertson’s Reparation reception held on SUNO’s campus on November 30th. Faculty members involved in both events include Drs. Neighbors, Robertson, Wise, Russell, and Professors Blanchard and Montegut. Numerous students were present and engaged in activities for both events. Both events support the School’s themes of transformation, empowerment, and advocacy and both events are rooted in social justice work.

Edgar Blanchard, MSW, LMSW



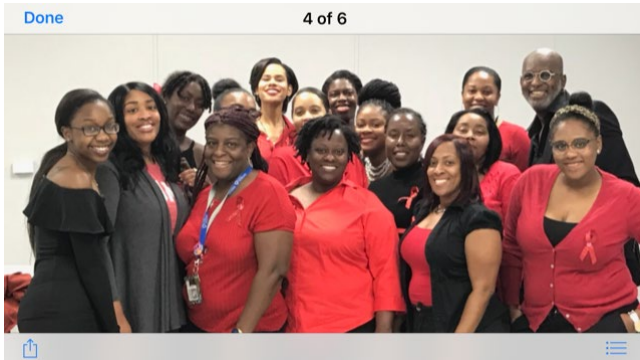
Recently, students from Phi Alpha Honor Society and The Men of Social Work participated in “Stand Down” a citywide event sponsored by the Veteran’s Administration (VA). It was held at the new VA facility on Canal and Galvez Streets. Students learned ways to assist veterans who are homeless with medical, dental, housing, and clothing needs. All students reported having a meaningful experience as they learned about concerns and problems of veterans who are homeless. The Veterans appeared gracious in accepting the assistance from the SUNO students. Professor Blanchard organized and facilitated this learning opportunity for students.



On November 3rd and 4th, Professor Blanchard attended the “Staying Awake: Resisting Dominance & Mobilizing Hope” conference which was co-hosted at SUNO. Diverse group of individuals from around the United States presented on the ways in which dominant groups oppress minority groups. He is pictured with Dr. Cornel Pewewardy, a Comanche who blessed the land at the beginning of the conference. Dr. Pewewardy offered insight about traditional healing practices that help undo colonization and he provided information about the experiences of First Nations groups with colonialism.

On November 10, 2017, Professor Blanchard attended the Veterans Day Program, also here at SUNO. The keynote speaker was an African-American Major General who spoke on his perspective of the U. S. military. On November 30, I attended the Reparations conference held on SUNO’s campus. Guest speakers were columnist Julianne Malveaux and Actor Danny Glover. There was also a Spoken Word Entertainer with some great poetry about the Black experience in The United States.

Michael Hickerson, MSW, RSW



On November 8, 2017, Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) School of Social Work Mobilization Against AIDS (MAA) Class presented NO HIV ON MY HBCU...A seminar to raise awareness, education, and prevention around the rising rate of HIV infections on historically black colleges and universities. The students of the MAA class decided that as social work students, it was important to identify gaps and needs that affect the health and wellness in their community if they are to create opportunities for change.

Through the content taught in this course, students identified the SUNO campus as a space to provide education and advocacy to a targeted population. Guest speakers from the community were invited to speak on issues around HIV/AIDS and the impact on the African-American Community. Guest Speakers included Michael Robinson, LCSW, Department of Public Health HIV/AIDS Program Supervisor; James Lewis, Tulane Wellness Center Prevention Coordinator, and Keynote Speaker Major Smith, BA, Crescent Care Peer Health Education Coordinator and a person who has been living with HIV/AIDS for more than 20 years. Each speaker brought critical information about the state of HIV/AIDS including but not limited to prevention strategies to living with HIV/AIDS. Dean Rebecca Chaisson delivered the opening greeting and Dr. Torin Sanders provided a spiritual message to the audience. The students and Professor Michael Hickerson are pictured above as they organized the program as an advocacy effort with the idea of

empowering through knowledge. Professor Hickerson believes that the process of learning and conducting this event was transformative for students as they gained new knowledge about HIV/AIDS and they learned the process of organizing a community educational event.

Claude Montegut, MSW, LMSW

Professor Claude Montegut facilitated the distribution of Thanksgiving baskets in November. The Students of Social Work (SOS) collected nonperishable items for their Thanksgiving basket drive. SOS collected enough items to fill three baskets. The baskets also included gift cards to Rouses Supermarket. One basket was received by an homebound elderly couple and two baskets were delivered to the Bethel Colony Transformation Ministry Women at the Well. Pictured are the SOS students and Professor Montegut who organized and facilitated the Thanksgiving gift basket event. Professor Montegut also attended the Liberation Healing Conference and the Reparation Reception.



Ben Robertson

Dr. Robertson presented at a National Liberation Healing Conference held on the third and fourth of November at SUNO. The conference focused on deconstructing the mechanisms of colonization. As a member of a panel, Dr. Robertson presented on tools that foster the development of positive cultural consciousness. Pictured with Dr. Robertson are students Jonah Quinn (far left) and James Taylor (right) and Professor Claude Montegut. Dr. Robertson attended the National African American Reparations Commission Benefit reception, which seeks funding to obtain payment an acknowledgement for the crimes committed to enslaved Africans in America. He also submitted a proposal for a \$27,000 summer grant proposal to New Orleans Recreational Department.



Harry Russell

Dr. Russell submitted two Board of Regents grants, one targeted enhancement for the School of Social Work and the other a collaborative effort between the SSW and the College of Education to enhance student success and retention. Dr. Russell and Dr. Chaisson submitted the targeted Board of Regents

proposal while he and Dr. Willie Jones submitted the collaborative grant. He was engaged in numerous meetings with Dr. Belisle and his co-investigators in order to complete and submit the grant applications.

Dr. Russell has also been busy with planning for Title IV-E students along with Sue Edgerson, the Title IV-E coordinator. He conducted the departmental curriculum meeting and presented to the university-wide Curriculum committee the SSW plan for returning to part-time/advanced standing admissions in the Spring semester of 2018. The university curriculum committee approved the return of the part-time and advanced standing admission to the spring 2018 semester. Dr. Russell and Mrs. Camille Alexander are shown reviewing files for MSW admission during the Spring semester.



According to Dr. Russell, the departmental curriculum committee agreed to have an elective each semester addressing Child Welfare and family issues. The committee tabled a discussion about adding a forensic social work component in the program. Committee members suggested that forensic social work become a practice area with three required elective courses- (9 hrs.) dedicated to this area. Another idea is to develop a six-week summer certificate program that would be open to SUNO students and to the public.

There was a meeting with the field unit to develop strategies to have students placed prior to the start of the semester and to begin integrating DCFS strategies into field seminar course. Met with multiple students seeking to drop classes or withdraw from the university. Finally, met with a few students, who sought additional clarification of research assignments and upcoming test.

Torin Sanders

Dr. Torin Sanders conducted three workshops for staff of the Department of Child and Family Services on the topic of "Worker Safety." The workshops were conducted with Dr. Derrick Freeman on November 2, 9, 16. He provided training to Rayne Memorial Child Care staff on "Self Care" (November 3).

He attended the Board meeting of the Children & Youth Planning Board on November 14. He serves on the Executive Board. He was reappointed for a two-year term to this board. He participated in The Annual Veterans Day Program (Friday, Nov. 10) that was held in the conference center on the SUNO campus. He attended Board meetings of Gulf Coast Social Services (November 17) and the Metropolitan Human Services District "Faith Partners Initiative"