

# The Talking Circle

Summer 2017

Issue 14

**We want to partner with you!**

## *Advisory Board*

The Advisory Board is comprised of students, alumni, and community members whose input and assistance are important to the Program. The Board takes on various projects aimed at enriching students' experience in the Program. Current projects include a mentoring program and an increased technological presence.

**Interested in serving as a voting member or as part of a particular committee or project? Reach out to Robin (contact info below)!**

## *Internships*

We are always looking for quality, dynamic internship experiences for our students. If you have an interest in hosting a junior for 50 hours (1 semester) or a senior for 400 hours (2 semesters), or you just want to learn more:

**Contact**  
**Robin MacHattie,**  
**Administrative**  
**Coordinator @**  
**518-783-4123**  
[rmachattie@siena.edu](mailto:rmachattie@siena.edu)

## Professor Diana Strock-Lynskey Retires



### *Message from Diana....*

Across our lives there are these rare moments. An event takes place, creating a space and place and access to an unanticipated pathway that, should we choose to move into it, has the power to change our lives in inexplicable ways.

Such was the case when I received a phone call from Professor Robert Rivas during the spring of 1990. A full-time social work faculty member was leaving unexpectedly. I had served as a guest speaker for the course she offered on Death, the Dying Process, Loss and Grief. She had recommended me – would I be interested in coming in for an interview for this position?

It's hard to believe that was 27 years ago!

Sometimes I find myself asking, where did the time go? However, when I stop and reflect on all that has transpired, it becomes very apparent that it has been chock full of incredible individuals that I have been blessed to have been able to work with – students, faculty, clients, staff, administrators, community members, advocates, and organizers. There are so many stories and learnings that I would like to share but could never do justice to in this limited space..... Please know that you have - and will always remain - in my heart and soul and that you contributed so much to the person I have become.

*(continued on Page 5)*

## Congratulations, Class of 2017!

During this year's Honoring Ceremony on Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, we inducted 15 graduating seniors into Siena College's Delta Upsilon Chapter of the National Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society.

Major Field Award (Program Award): Marissa Wade  
 Student of the Year (College Award): Samantha Tighe  
 Veteran of the Year (College Award): Sean Cochrane  
 Commuter Student of the Year (College Award): Juan Rodriguez

Congratulations to the entire class of 22 students for their hard work and impressive achievements!

### Social and Economic Justice Award presented at 2017 Honoring Ceremony



Doniesha Marshall ('17) was the recipient of the Social Work Program's Social and Economic Justice Award for her four years of leadership of the PRIDE-GSA on campus.  
 Congratulations, Doni!

### Fast Facts...

**We currently have 16 entering freshmen social work majors!**

**We look forward to starting the 2017-18 academic year with a total of 76 social work majors.**

**We had 7 students participate in the study abroad program in Spring 2017. Students studied in Spain, Vietnam, Thailand, England, Ecuador (2), and Namibia.**

**The School of Liberal Arts welcomes new Dean, Lara Whelan. We wish Dean Harrison the best in his retirement!**

**Every dollar helps a future student! To make a contribution to the endowed Social Work Scholarship, contact the Development Office at 518-783-2432, or at [development@siena.edu](mailto:development@siena.edu). Contributions can also be sent by mail:**

**Siena College Development Office, 515 Loudon Rd., Loudonville, NY 12211.  
 (Please reference 'Social Work scholarship' on your check).**





Lobby Day 2017!



*Social action and research...*

Working with The Food Pantries for the Capital District, Assistant Professor Cynthia Bott, along with Sean Cochrane ('17) and Juan Rodriguez ('17) concluded a two year research project surveying consumers of local food pantries. The project provided data on the characteristics of consumers as well as feedback on consumer satisfaction to the Coalition, and examined political engagement of consumers. Sean and Juan conducted a poster presentation of the research in April at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in Memphis. Sean, Juan, and Cynthia also presented the data at the Food Summit held at Siena College in April.

Assistant Professor Elisa Martin, along with Amelia O'Rourke ('18) have been conducting research involving Camp to Belong-NY, a week long summer camp aimed at bringing siblings together who have been separated within the foster care system. Amelia also conducted a poster presentation in April at the NCUR in Memphis. Amelia is working with Professor Martin over the summer through the CURCA Summer Scholars program on the research project, with the goal of finishing their research by the end of the year.

The Social Work Club, with Cynthia Bott - faculty advisor, had an active year. In addition to representing the Department at numerous campus functions, the Club organized a food drive for a local pantry and a clothing drive for St. Joseph's. The Club also participated in a Halloween activity with residents of St. Catherine's Center for Children and organized an art activity for the pediatric ward at Albany Medical Center. Lastly, in conjunction with the Psychology Department and the Psychology Club, the Club sponsored a showing and discussion of the documentary "The Anonymous People".

Juniors used SWRK315 course assignments to engage in numerous projects of change, including: fundraised and participated in the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's on campus, created Memory Cafes in Albany and Schenectady, participated in a youth count focused on homeless youth in Rensselaer County, raised awareness about homelessness through participation in the annual Joseph's House Winter Walk, and aided Joseph's House in researching the municipal law for set asides for low income housing in any new housing development.



## Social Work Runs in the Family at Siena College!



Danielle Lumia graduated from Siena's Social Work Program in 1996 and she was pregnant with her beautiful daughter, Logan, when she walked across the stage. Professors Diana Strock-Lynskey and Donna McIntosh both had her in classes.

Danielle's daughter, Logan, is now a rising senior in the very same social work program. Professor McIntosh remembers first seeing Logan in her social work elective, Juvenile Justice. "Logan, have we met before? You look very familiar?" Logan's reply? - "No we haven't met before but I think you had my mom when she graduated from here!"

Danielle went on to obtain her MSW and currently works in the area in the field of mental health. What a thrill to be with both of them at the 2016 Winter Walk for the Homeless for Joseph's House!



**Message from Diana Strock-Lynskey continued...**

In 2016, I experienced my 40th anniversary as a social work/sociology alumna of Siena College. In 2015, I was recognized for 25 years of service to the Social Work Program. In 2017, I will celebrate the 30th anniversary of my private practice and consulting work. In 2018, I will have spent 45 years of my life involved in human services endeavors, the vast majority of which have been in my role as a social work student, practitioner, advocate, volunteer organizer, and educator. It is my hope within the next year, that I will complete my PhD in Social Work. All of this has also taken place within the broader context of my marriage – approaching 37 years – and raising a family – consisting now of three adult children.

Such accomplishments have tremendous significance to me as markers and milestones and have been wonderful occasions for celebration. At the same time, in today's world, it has sometimes been hard for my children, as well as students, to imagine how anyone could stay in one work place for so long? While in college, our daughter asked a similar question during an interview she conducted with me as part of a course assignment to learn about the experiences of a professional. At the end of the interview she noted that "I hope to find work that I feel as passionate about in my life".

Through my teaching, scholarship and service work, I have strived to convey my passion for the rights of children, women's rights, individuals with disabilities, indigenous peoples, individuals who are GLBTQEA, families who have someone who is incarcerated, reproductive rights, mental health consumers, genocide and holocaust survivors, 9/11 first responders, the needs of grievors and the sacredness of the grieving process, the importance of academic service learning work, healing justice, and much more. I have also sought to tap into your passions and provide ways to cultivate them.

Partings are not easy and it is hard to know how to put closure on the most compelling chapters of our lives. As I venture forth into the next chapter, as it has been for me, thus far in my life, I wish for you also those rare moments that provide unanticipated pathways that offer you ways to stay true to your passions and that really do make it all so worthwhile.

**Save the Date and Join us in Celebration  
of Professor Diana Strock-Lynskey****Friday, September 29, 2017 from 4-7 pm**in the Social Work Commons, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Rosetti Hall.RSVP to [McIntosh@siena.edu](mailto:McIntosh@siena.edu) by 9/22. If you have pictures or a note/message for Diana, send that along to[McIntosh@siena.edu](mailto:McIntosh@siena.edu)

**Donna McIntosh** has retired from the Board of Directors of the Coalition for Homeless Youth after 31 years of service. Her dedication to and advocacy for this population will never end, however! If you're interested in learning about how you can join in these efforts, visit <http://www.nychy.org/> or email Donna at [mcintosh@siena.edu](mailto:mcintosh@siena.edu).

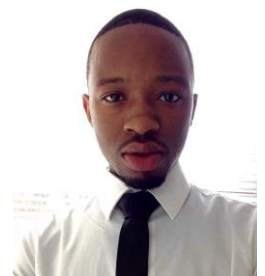


**Elisa Martin** has been hired as a full-time Assistant Professor, after serving for three years as a Visiting Professor. We are happy to welcome her into this new role!



**Carla Sofka** was the recipient of the Raymond Kennedy Excellence in Scholarship Award. Congratulations, Carla!

Cynthia Bott, along with two seniors, Sean Cochrane and Juan Rodriguez, designed and implemented a survey of food pantry consumers for the Food Pantries of the Capital District. The data was presented at the 2017 Food Summit. Analysis continues.



**Gordon Collier** ('12) was hired as an adjunct instructor and taught SWRK 100 in the spring 2017 semester. Welcome, Gordon!



# Social Media Corner



“Like us on Facebook!”

[Siena College Social Work Program.](#)



We’re now on Instagram!  
[\*\*SienaSocialWork\*\*](#)



Did we mention we’re on Twitter, too?  
[\*\*@SienaSWK\*\*](#)

Have an idea on how we could increase our social media presence? Do you have marketing tips or tricks? Share your ideas with us! Send them via email to [rmachattie@siena.edu](mailto:rmachattie@siena.edu)



*L to R/front:* Lindsey Esposito, Marissa Wade, Nicole Tote, Caitlin DeVoe, Sanela Delic, Stephanie Schoonmaker, Samantha Tighe, Annamae Fingar, Sean Cochrane, Meghan Reilly, Margaret Bird, Noelle Pagan, Doniesha Marshall  
*L to R/back:* Zane Mandel-Michalak, Victoria Engelhard, Kaitlyn Geldmacher, Andrea Kaplan, Anthony Florio, Amy Baker, Robin Teal, Juan Rodriguez, Paolo Fiore

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