



ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

The Catalyst

MEET DR. QUERNA

Dr. Katie Querna is one of our new assistant professors for the 2020-2021 academic year. Before coming to the SCSU department of social work, Dr. Querna earned her BS in Elementary Education from Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon in 2003; her MSSW from the Columbia University School of Social Work in New York, New York in 2008; her Ph. D. from the University of Washington School of Social Work in Seattle, Washington in 2018; and completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Minnesota Medical School in the Department of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health in August of 2020.

Dr. Querna is a mixed methodologist who uses feminist and community-based approaches to research gender and sexuality norms with the aim of improving health and has written or co-authored several peer-reviewed articles, with several more either in preparation or under review for future publication.

Dr. Querna loves to teach, facilitate and mentor and has taught in higher education and community settings for over 15 years. She also teaches adaptive yoga, and loves to dance, ski, experiment in the kitchen, and snuggle her senior dachshund, Willie.



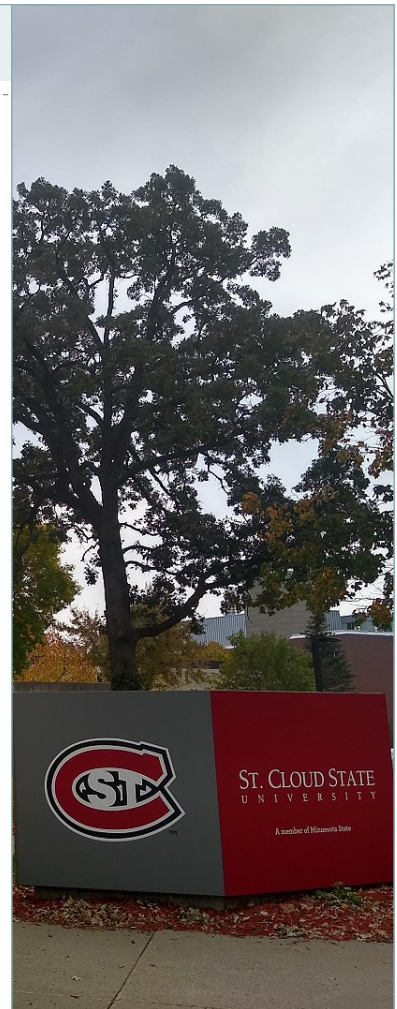
Dr. Querna and Willie

A SAMPLING OF DR. QUERNA'S RESEARCH

We asked Dr. Querna if she would like to share some of her peer-reviewed research, and she graciously sent us this list. Each article is briefly summarized.

Article 1: Taliaferro, L., Doty, J., Gower, A., Querna, K., & Rovito, M. (2019). Profiles of risk and protection for violence and bullying perpetration among adolescent males. *Journal of School Health* 90(3). 212-223.

Summary: A sample of 63,818 boys in grades 8, 9, and 11 was analyzed to identify patterns of 22 behavioral, intrapersonal, family, and school and community risk/protective factors. These patterns were categorized into five groups of risk, safety, and connectedness. The article concludes that there are substantial variations in boys who engage in violence and bullying, with many cumulative, co-occurring risk factors. *(continued next page)*



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GOT RESEARCH?

If you would like your research or publication information presented in the next issue of *The Catalyst*, feel free to contact Dr. Teboh with your information.

Dr. Teboh can be reached during his office hours in SH 237 or via email at:

cteboh@stcloudstate.edu

DR. QUERNA'S RESEARCH (CONTINUED)

Article 2: Masters, N.T., Morrison, D.M., Querna, K., Casey, E.A., & Beadnell, B. (2017). Having "the talk": Correlates of young men's intention to discuss birth control with female partners. *Perspectives in Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 49(1), 37-43.

Summary: 372 heterosexually active men aged 18-25 were surveyed on attitudes toward, norms regarding and self-efficacy about discussing birth control, and about endorsement of two sexual scripts: a traditionally masculine script, which was associated with lower likelihood of intention to discuss birth control, and an alternative, gender-equitable script, which was not associated with any intention. The article concludes that reducing belief in traditionally masculine scripts (or transforming them to include discussing birth control), along with increased self-efficacy and positive norms and attitudes pertaining to discussing birth control, are strategies that merit further exploration and could have positive implications for sexual and reproductive health of emerging adults.

Article 3: Shaw, J., McLean, K.C., Taylor, B., Swartout, K., and Querna, K. (2016). Beyond resilience: Why we need to look at systems too. *Psychology of Violence*, 6(1), 34.

Summary: This article examines contemporary social science research around what engenders resilience and how interventions to promote it are developed, focusing on how discussions about resilience tend to place the responsibility for overcoming adversity on the individual, rather than considering the effect of systems. The article concludes that, to improve outcomes for individuals and communities, researchers need to consider how systems and structures determine the capacity for individuals' resilience and how placing the responsibility for resilience on the individual benefits the oppressor.

Article 4: Casey, E., Querna, K., Masters, N., & Blair, B., Wells, E., Morrison, D., & Hoppe, M. (2015). Patterns of intimate partner violence and sexual risk behavior among young heterosexually active men. *Journal of Sex Research*, 53(2), 239-250.

Summary: A diverse, community sample of 334 heterosexually active men aged 18 to 25 was examined to determine whether and how men with distinct behavior patterns of intimate partner violence (IPV) differed in sexual risk-related behavior and attitudes. The article suggests that interventions with men who engage in such behaviors must account for the physical and psychological harm of this behavior and the sexual risk to which men may expose their partners (including exposure to STIs).

Article 5: Querna, K. (2008). Designer vaginas. *Columbia School of Social Work Journal*, 6, 57-67.

Summary: This article explores how historical representations and contemporary perceptions of the vagina have shaped attitudes towards female genitalia, and why society has perpetuated the objectified, idealized female image and imposed that falsification on the vagina. This includes an exploration of female genital cosmetic surgery, the potential impetus behind increases in such surgeries, and the implications of such surgeries for both individuals and society, with a particular focus on the implications of these cultural messages of "perfection" on social work practice and a woman's sense of acceptance and adequacy.

We would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to Dr. Querna for taking the time to compile this list.



PASSING THE BATON IN THE TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Department of Social Work is pleased to welcome Professor Aileen Moore, who was brought in as an assistant professor this year to take over the Title IV-E program from Dr. Mary Pfohl, who has been in charge of the program for over a decade. Recently, we reached out to both Dr. Pfohl and Professor Moore to get their thoughts on the program: where it came from, where it is at the moment, and where it's going.

DR. PFOHL'S INTERVIEW

How did the Title IV-E program come to SCSU?

It came to SCSU through Sandy Robin, who was a professor here at the time. She was very invested in child welfare services from her own history of providing services in that arena, and she wanted to promote it. It had been a part of the University of Minnesota in their social work program, but that was at the master's level. Sandy became very involved in trying to reach out to bachelor's-level schools and students. Sandy was a real key to that development, not only at St. Cloud State, but for all the Minnesota State schools who have the Title IV-E program.

And it grew out of a recognition that a lot of rural counties rely on bachelor's-level social workers, especially in their public sector, and that what we were seeing was really an underqualified workforce – people who are not knowledgeable enough or skilled enough in child welfare practice. And so that was really the impetus of bringing that to that bachelor's level, because that's the reality where a lot of people start out, and also really wanting to support that rural community in their child welfare work.

Approximately how many students have passed through the program?

I've been pondering that! I'm thinking that, for bachelor's level students, it's somewhere between 100 and 110 students. That's a rough estimate over the last 16 years. And then our MSW program started more recently, and right at this point I'm thinking we're right around 20 graduates who are child welfare scholars. *(continued next page)*

WHAT IS THE TITLE IV-E PROGRAM?

The Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholars program is designed to reverse the trend of deprofessionalization of child welfare workers in public and tribal agencies by providing students with a stipend and giving them course content geared towards working in child welfare. After graduation, students who enroll in the Title IV-E program are expected to work in those Tier 1 public or tribal child welfare agencies for the amount of time that they received the stipend.

For more information, contact Professor Moore at:

aileen.moore@stcloudstate.edu

SHOW YOUR GREEN SCREEN

We would like to remind all of our staff, faculty, and students that it's important to take the COVID self-assessment any time you're planning to come to campus.

You can take the self-assessment by clicking the large "self-assessment" button at the top of any page on the St. Cloud State University website.



PASSING THE BATON (CONTINUED)

What are the main differences between SCSU and other Minnesota State systems-wide institutions?

I think the place where it's most unique is how we educate and develop the skills for our students who are in the child welfare program. How we have approached it here is that it pairs with the cohort model of our BSW program, and also really with the MSW program as well. So, we have students who are in clusters, and we bring them into the IV-E program, in parallel with our social work program, and then, with those smaller groups of students, what we do is almost more seminar-like. We have more frequent meetings with students. Students are given additional information very specific to child welfare, and in those meetings, they have the opportunity to have more discussion.

So, I think what makes us unique is more of that personal connection with the person who is the coordinator of the IV-E program. So, right now, that's Professor Moore. Students are able to hear from someone who's been in the field in a more direct manner than what you're going to get in this more blanket approach in the classroom. For me, part of that comes out of how I believe we need to do child welfare work, and it's relational. We have to connect with our clients in some sort of way, and so we develop that with our students by meeting with them in smaller groups, even some one-on-one time.

What will you say stands out in our program?

That personal connection. The other piece is that, when I was program coordinator, and I also see it with Professor Moore, we are bringing ourselves into it. We have years of knowledge and experience that we are carrying with us. It's not just bringing in speakers or that kind of thing to encourage that development. We've actually walked the walk. And I think that also makes us a bit of a standout. I think other programs have some of that, but I do think that it's one of the advantages that students experience as they are in our program.

What have been the most challenging things during the course of the program?

You know, there's two ways I look at it. So, one is on the student side of it. It's helping students to recognize what's real - what the realities are of going into the work - without dampening their spirit or passion. I think that's a fine line, and that there are certain people - and I can't tell you what the material is - but they're cut out of the right cloth. They're gonna jump in, they're gonna do it, they're gonna love it, and they embrace all of the "ugly" [situations] and the good, the hard and the joyful. They're just able to do that. I think that's one piece from the student side of things that is challenging.

I think, on the administrative side of it, it's to have the necessary buy-in in a consistent way as we undergo changes as a university. Our school went from a college to a school. There were changes in deans. Changes in the provost and office of research and sponsored programs. Changes within our own department: the faculty that were here, as well as who's the chair. Adding our MSW program. I think that, with all of those system changes going on, trying to stabilize and build our program has been really challenging. I think that's just a reality of higher education. I don't see that challenge necessarily going away, but it's one to really be cognizant of.

How can these challenges be addressed going forward?

I think we always need to be making the case of "why is this important? Why is it that we're doing it?" To a certain extent, for the university, what they want to hear about is workforce development. And that's important. But I think that the very bottom line is that we have the opportunity to grow people to be change agents with some of the most vulnerable people in our society. That's children, for starters, and that's marginalized populations - particularly marginalized in race, because we know there's huge disparities in child welfare systems. And I think we need to keep bringing that part forward, that we need to be making a difference, and we need to do it in our own back yard, here in St. Cloud. We need to do it throughout the state of Minnesota as well.

How are alumni fairing afield? Do you keep in contact with them? What happens if they don't honor their obligation?

I might answer the second question first, as far as do we keep in contact with them, and yes, we do. That's actually part of our contract with DHS. We have to stay in contact with our graduates for three years following their degree completion. The amount of time they're in our program, they have to give back by being employed, preferably, in public and tribal child welfare. And that can be at the state level or administrative level, but that's where we first want our students to go. So, we do track that. We keep in contact with our students to know how they are doing. "Are you still at those agencies? Have you made changes?" Those sorts of things. And then, once they're done, we try and also stay in touch with them as far as "are you still staying in the field?" Our hope is that they will stay in child welfare long-term or use this to impact child welfare long-term. So, they may not be doing direct work in public or tribal child welfare settings, but they may be doing other things.

So, I would say that if we look at the three-year follow-up, the majority of our students - I'm thinking like 85 to 90 percent of them - have continued in the field of child welfare beyond their obligation time, which I'm thrilled with. I think that that speaks very well about the students' commitment to doing child welfare work, and their reasons for coming into the program.



“We’ve actually walked the walk. And I think that also makes us a bit of a standout.”

They've stuck with it. I've also seen that a number of students have used it as a steppingstone to other kinds of things. Our bachelor's level students, especially - because that's where the majority of our grads currently are from - are using it as a steppingstone to a master's degree, moving into program management or supervisory kinds of positions. I know one student who actually went on to law school with a very clear focus of wanting to be able to blend her social work and the law degree in order to benefit children and families that are part of the child welfare system. I know there's a number of our grads who have moved from the public sector into the private sector in order to do more parenting skills work. Master's level folks might be moving into therapy, those sorts of things.

I think that our students have done a pretty good job in staying connected and making a difference. Part of going to MSSA is I get to run into our grads and hear where they're at, and that's really a delight to see. A majority of our graduates stay in Minnesota. Some do move on to other places, and certainly we don't say "you can't do that," but the majority are staying here and serving residents of Minnesota [which includes the recognized tribes]. I'm not sure of [the exact number of students] in tribal child welfare. I don't believe our grads have gotten into all of the 11 tribes, but [they] have been present in a number of them [primarily in the northwest section of Minnesota]. Which, for me, is really encouraging - students are not just going into public county settings; students are going into other settings, too, where children and families need support.

For the few students who have not honored their obligation, they go into this knowing that if they do not fulfill it, if they aren't employed as they agreed, then they have to do a payback. And that's a cash payback. We have had a couple of students, and hopefully we catch them early on, but they realize it's not a fit. But the beauty of this, to me, is we do have a time limit. Graduates don't have to be looking for a job in child welfare until they find something in order to fulfill the obligation. So, for our undergrad students, they have 90 days to find a job, and if they don't, then we say, "thank you very much, still try to find something in child welfare, but we're not going to push you and ask for the money back." For MSW students we extend that by another 3 months, so it's about a six-month timeframe for them. So, it's a *somewhat* firm boundary. *(continued next page)*



PASSING THE BATON (CONTINUED)

How has passing the baton been?

You know, it's been really interesting, because child welfare has been my life's work. I am approaching 40 years in the field of social work, and almost all of those have been in child welfare. So, the passing of the baton has been, on one hand, delightful, knowing that it's going to somebody who has a passion for this, is invested in it, is recognizing all of the different pieces that need to be addressed. There is a thrill in it for me. To see the students who are continuing to come into the program, and the excitement with it, and to see it from a different lens, it's been really enjoyable.

I readily admit there's this piece of a loss because it has been such a huge part of my life. It's been part of almost all of my time here at SCSU, so, it's a loss of the connections with people, the work that goes around it, and the rhythm of the life. Those kinds of things. But I also recognize it's time - taking off from the president's theme of "it's time" - for a transition. The baton does need to get passed. For the health of the program, it needs to be passed. It's a very good thing. And I'm relieved that there's someone I can give it to.

So, yeah—it's been mixed. But I also feel like I'm ready, and the program's ready. It's bumpy on the backside, because, with Professor Moore, there's a lot to take in, especially on the administrative end of things. There's a *ton* of things! The program components are easy, I think. I'm trying to help smooth it out as much as I can for her without me doing it again. I think that's my challenge all the time. I shouldn't be doing it anymore. It really needs to be in Professor Moore's hands.

It's like being the navigator without landing the plane yourself.

Yeah. And that, even though I have a lot of years behind me, that doesn't mean that I have the answers. It doesn't mean I have the key. We need a fresh look at it. That's healthy for our students, for our program, and for child welfare overall. I think that's the delightful part of it. And child welfare has really got some rough hurdles and situations that they're dealing with. A few examples: systemic racism and ableism, racial disparities, finding healthy supports for children and their family systems for the long haul. But people [professionals, advocates, and policy makers] are seeing those things and are challenging them and trying to address them. We're not walking around with a "hear no evil, see no evil, do no evil" kind of approach. We recognize that we could be our own worst enemy if we're not careful. We have to admit the mistakes. And correct them. Part of the correction of mistakes is - as a profession, and also as a system - to forgive. And, for me, forgiveness isn't like "forgive and forget." That's not what I mean. It's to be able to truly do that turn. It's like - "yeah, I screwed it up. I'm trying to do better. Please forgive me, help me figure out how to do it better." That we do what we can to restore where we can. And that's what I respect about the profession, that we're trying to do that as much as we're able to.

Absolutely. Well, thank you very much, once again, for being willing to meet with me this wonderfully early in the morning, for answering the questions, and for putting the program together. This program's been your baby, so thank you.

But it's been a fun baby to watch grow up, so... <laughs>

And it really is a sign of the strength of the program that you can hand it off to somebody.

It's been a delight.



AILEEN MOORE'S INTERVIEW

We then caught up with Professor Moore to gain her perspectives into the transition and the program's future.

What would you say was your biggest concern coming in?

I had a few. Certainly, there was adjusting to a new state. The work I have done previously was more national child welfare, although it was looking at it through state court proceedings in the state of Arizona. So, I knew it would be a bit of a learning curve, not to mention me and my family adjusting to a whole new state and a whole new city. And, definitely, filling some very big shoes! Dr. Pfohl has built this amazing program, and she's been there for over a decade, and I wanted to make sure that I did a great job and honor the students who have already begun the program as well as the new students that enter it. I also wondered what it would be like starting this endeavor during a pandemic, and, lastly, I knew it would be a new experience being a big state university vs a small private college, where I was previously.

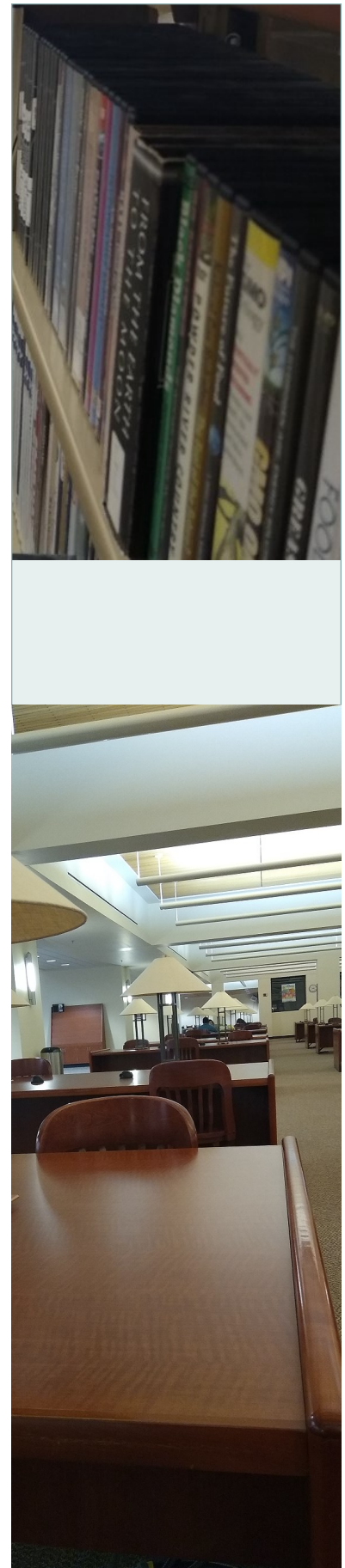
You wanted to make sure that she knew, above all else, that her program is in good hands.

Absolutely. Yes. I can only imagine how it must feel to work so hard to build a program over so many years and then need to pass the baton. That has to be incredibly difficult. And I want to do right by her and the participants of the program. She has been an amazing mentor. She goes off to head the Alnwick Program in England in the Fall and I wish she could clone herself and keep one version here!

Do you still have any of those concerns? If not, what's changed?

Well, I would say that I've had some really good mentoring. I feel like Dr. Pfohl has been there a hundred percent to help me and support me. And the students themselves are extremely patient and forgiving. So, I am at a better place. But I feel like every day I'm learning lots of new things, and I just have to keep continuing to do my best. I have a great team supporting me going forward, and it's a team effort. I am so pleased that despite this pandemic, the transition has gone really smoothly. I am really thankful for that. And I have enjoyed being a part of a large state university. I appreciate the diversity of students and faculty, and what I appreciate most is how accessible this education is to the students. It's so incredibly vital for our work and our field.

(Continued next page)



ABOUT PROFESSOR MOORE

Aileen Moore comes to St. Cloud State University with over 25 years of experience in the field of Social Work. She has had the privilege of working with resilient individuals in New York City, Phoenix, and on the Juarez/El Paso (Mexico/US) Border. Her work has been with many different populations, including homeless women and families, adolescents in underserved communities, school-aged special education students, and refugee and immigrant children. The latter part of her career in social work has been focused on the area of Child Welfare, where she served as both a Child Welfare Liaison and a Foster Care Program Director with unaccompanied minors (children who come to the US without a guardian), from all across the globe. Aileen began teaching as an Adjunct Faculty with Arizona State University's MSW Program and later became an Assistant Professor with the BSW Program at the College of St Scholastica, where she taught for five years. She is very excited to join the Pack at St Cloud State, where she has been offered the opportunity to marry her two loves, teaching and child welfare!

PASSING THE BATON (CONTINUED)

Absolutely. So, what are your expectations about the program so far?

One of the things I've had to consider is filling gaps that exist because of the pandemic. Internships were not as easy to find in the Tier 1 setting, which is our preferred setting - working directly in county and tribal child welfare. So, there's been a lot of discussion of how we can fill those gaps in the meantime. One of the things that was important to me was getting a lot of frontline workers involved so that they could be mentors, in a sense, to our students: coming in, speaking with them, sharing their insights, so that they could really get a sense of what it's like in the real world if they don't have an internship to show them that. And then we have been looking into the VHS software.

[Note: "VHS" refers to a virtual reality pilot program being developed by the University of Utah called the "Virtual Home Simulation." The SCSU Title IV-E program has been in the early stages of working out a partnership/licensing agreement.]

That is taking a little bit longer than I had hoped, they're trying to come to a final legal agreement that we can sign with them. Looking into that, as well as simulations that we can do on-grounds.

The pandemic has changed things, and it's really meaning you've got to think on your feet.

Yes. And I was concerned that it was going to be a hard transition because of that. But surprisingly, it was very smooth. The team has been really great. Really supportive.

What do you hope to accomplish within the first year of your leadership?

Within my first year I am getting my footing and ensuring to the best of my ability that I am supporting our future child welfare workers. I want to be sure they go into this work feeling as prepared and supported as possible. Looking forward, I have some aspirations. We are in year 5 of a 5-year cycle, so my wheels are turning as far as what this program could look like if we are awarded a grant for another 5 years. I am currently in the process of meeting with my Department and Administration to be sure everyone has a say in what the future holds for the Title IV-E Program.

AILEEN MOORE'S INTERVIEW

In my very short time, my experience has been that we have had many more qualified applicants than we do stipends, so I am hopeful we can figure out a way to expand the program and give more stipends going forward. I would love to be able to provide this opportunity to the deserving students out there. Of course, that will be dependent on many factors, but if my magic wand can work some magic, it would be to provide more stipends to the students deserving of the opportunity.

Absolutely.

Yeah. I think that would be a big one. Also, I would really like to develop some sort of mentoring program where students have someone to depend on, whether that is a student who graduated from the program or a professional who's been out in the field for a little bit of time. That's been a dream I've had since starting.

And that becomes another step in making it more relational, less abstract, and... "welcome to the rest of your life."

Totally.

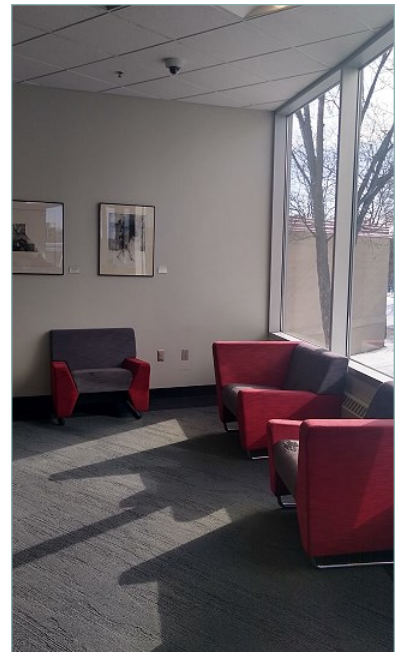
So, where will this program be in the next 5 years?

Well, right now I am in a lot of conversations with the department - talking about what they see as the future of the program, because it's definitely not a one-person show. It's definitely a department endeavor, and so, we're developing the vision for the next five years together. One of the questions is - will we have a grant for the next five years? We all think pretty positively that yes, we will. We have a long history with this program, and we've had a strong program, so we foresee that we will be funded, but that is something that is to be seen. And then, like I said, in those five years, I'm hoping that we can serve even more students, and get more qualified child welfare workers out there into the workforce.

Where they go out, and stay out, and do a good job.

Yes!

We would like to thank Dr. Pfohl and Professor Moore for taking time out of their busy schedules to allow us to interview them. And we would like to extend a special thanks to Dr. Pfohl for her years of service in this program!



ST CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

The mission of the department is to use an anti-oppression lens, with a focus on race, class and gender, to inform both its educational environment and educational programs. Faculty, staff and students commit to an experiential and transformative educational process that will challenge them to think critically and analyze systemic inequalities in the United States and the world. This process will prepare professional social workers to work as change agents in a diverse world.

PRESENTING AT MSSA

Recently, one of our Master of Social Work students had the opportunity to present in the student showcase at the 128th MSSA Annual Training Conference and Expo. Erick Westbrook is an advanced standing student who is completing his field practicum at SCSU Wellness Coaching, a program that is aimed at helping students achieve their health and wellness goals.

One of the program's purposes is to increase students' overall sense of belonging to the university, which is a stronger predictor of retention than GPA. Erick's master's thesis is a pilot study to determine the feasibility of using data collected by the SCSU Belonging Initiative (which runs surveys to measure students' sense of belonging every semester) to evaluate whether or not participation in wellness coaching is associated with increased belonging.

Erick describes the experience of sharing a presentation about his thesis at the MSSA conference as "stressful, exhausting, and rewarding," noting that he received a great deal of positive feedback from people in attendance (including one professional wellness coach!). He is proud of the opportunity to be an ambassador for SCSU Wellness Coaching to a statewide audience.

St. Cloud State University Department of social Work

226 Stewart Hall
St Cloud State University
720 Fourth Avenue South
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301-
4498

Phone: (320) 308-3139
Fax: (320) 308-3285
Email:
socialwork@stcloudstate.edu

Visit us on the web at
www.stcloudstate.edu/

