Heller Highlights
Recent Achievements of Faculty and Researchers at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Brandeis University
March 2009

New Publications


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New Publications (cont.)


New Grants

Cathy Burack (PI), Susan Lanspery, Abhijit Deshpande, Tracy Cutter
“Evaluation of Project Compass”
Funder: Nellie Mae Education Foundation
*This project will evaluate Project Compass, a four-year initiative at four public institutions of higher education in New England that strives to eliminate achievement gaps and significantly increase academic success, retention, and graduation rates for minority, low-income, and first generation undergraduate students. The evaluation will focus on student outcomes, successful institutional change strategies, and best practices.*

Deborah Garnick (PI), Margaret Lee
“Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment: Washington Circle/HEDIS Performance Measures”
Funder: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
*This project will examine the early phases of treatment to determine factors that are associated with adolescents starting and staying in treatment; and the relationship between an adolescent meeting the criteria for these process measures and their treatment outcomes.*
New Grants (cont.)

Deborah Garnick (PI), Constance Horgan, Elizabeth Merrick, Mary Brolin, Sharon Reif, Mary Jo Larson, Robert Dunigan, Dominic Hodgkin, Eve Wittenberg, Margot Davis, Margaret Lee
“Services Accountability Improvement System (SAIS)”
Funder: SAMHSA, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), subcontract to Research Triangle Institute
This project supports CSAT’s Substance Abuse Treatment Services Accountability Improvement System (SAIS), in which discretionary grantees report to SAMHSA on their efforts on an individual client basis.

Gary Gaumer (PI), Joanne Beswick, Yara Halasa, Marwa Farag, Christiana Atuaka
“Planning Project for Eastern Mediterranean Region Health Policy and Economics Program”
Funder: American University in Cairo/Gates Foundation
This project helps the American University in Cairo and the World Health Organization plan the first center for health policy in the Middle East region. The center will have a Master’s degree program in health economics and policy and a regional collaborative research program in health policy. Bill and Melinda Gates are supporting the effort.

Deborah Gurewich (PI), Jeffrey Pratts, Donald Shepard, Deborah Garnick
“Coordinating Primary Care and Substance Abuse Treatment Services”
Funder: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
This study will examine the different approaches community health centers use for coordinating primary care and substance abuse treatment services, and evaluate how these different approaches affect care continuity and outcomes.

Andrew Hahn (PI), Susan Lanspery, Claudia Jacobs, Elenore Garton
“Small Foundations and Social Policy Involvement”
Funder: Annie E. Casey Foundation
This project focuses on how small and family foundations engage-or don’t engage-in various forms of social policy advocacy, formulation, implementation, and reform. Interviews are underway with foundation staff, trustees and others.

Constance Horgan (Co-PI), Sharon Reif (Co-PI), Christopher Tompkins, Jon Chilingerian
“Management Evidence-Based Practices in Substance Abuse Treatment”
Funder: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
This three-year study will identify management practices that substance abuse facilities can use to improve their overall performance, as measured by reduced client (re)admissions to detoxification and increased connection to lower levels of care.

Christopher Kingsley (PI)
“Multiple Education Pathways Blueprint (MEPB)”
Funder: US Department of Labor, subcontract to Jobs for the Future
The MEPB initiative brings together coalitions of schools, government agencies, community-based organizations, and youth to develop new educational options that encourage youth at risk of dropping out of school to keep attending, and encourage dropouts to return to school. Mr. Kingsley is advising MEPB coalitions in Gary, IN and Des Moines, IA.

Lorraine Klerman (PI), Laurie Nsiah-Jefferson, Susan Butler
“Assessment of Past Adolescent Family Life Research and Suggestions for the Future”
Funder: Office of Population Affairs, DHHS
This grant involves reviewing past research grants on adolescent pregnancy and making suggestions for their use in demonstration programs and in future research plans.

Peter Kreiner (PI), Robert Dunigan
“Evaluation of Grove Hall Getting Healthier”
Funder: SAMHSA/CSAP, subcontract to Institute for Health and Recovery
This project will evaluate a five-year HIV and substance abuse prevention intervention targeting high-risk youth in the Boston neighborhood of Grove Hall.

Peter Kreiner (PI), Carol Prost, Cindy Thomas
“Training and Technical Assistance Center for State Prescription Monitoring Program”
Funder: Bureau of Justice Assistance, Department of Justice
In partnership with the Alliance of States with Prescription Monitoring Programs (PMPs), Heller will provide training and technical assistance to states with PMPs or seeking to develop PMPs.

Peter Kreiner (PI), Robert Dunigan
“Evaluation of Roca HIV and Substance Abuse Prevention Project”
Funder: SAMHSA/CSAP, subcontract to Roca, Inc.
This project will evaluate a five-year HIV and substance abuse prevention intervention targeting street- and gang-involved young adults in Chelsea, East Boston, and Revere.

Peter Kreiner (PI), Robert Dunigan
“Evaluation of Wayside HIV and Substance Abuse Prevention Project in Four Housing Developments”
Funder: SAMHSA/CSAP, subcontract to Wayside Youth and Family Network
This project will evaluate a five-year HIV and substance abuse prevention intervention targeting immigrant youth in four housing developments in Somerville and Waltham.
New Grants (cont.)

Mary Jo Larson (PI), Christopher Tompkins, Mary Brolin, Margot Trotter Davis, Gail Strickler, Deborah McLellan, Angela Walter
“National Evaluation of Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap”
Funder: Open Society Institute
This project assists the Open Society Institute by conducting and disseminating an evaluation of an eight-state initiative to develop and implement financing, efficiency, and communication strategies to increase financing of addictions treatment and enroll more people into care.

Mary Jo Larson (PI), Christopher Tompkins, Constance Horgan, Jennifer Perloff, Rachel Sayko Adams
“Effects of Deployment on the Health of Military Dependents”
Funder: Department of Defense, Task Order of the HHS Program Support Center, subcontract to CDM Group
This project analyzes data from the military healthcare system, TRICARE, to describe healthcare utilization patterns of family members of active duty and Reserve/Guard service members and to estimate the impact of deployment of active duty members on family member healthcare utilization.

Walter Leutz (PI), Marji Erickson Warfield
“MA Helping Hands for Infants and Their Families (HHIF)”
Funder: DHHS
HHIF will provide parents and children with comprehensive home-based services using evidence-based methods including Early Intervention developmental assessments and services for the infants and, for the mothers and fathers, a peer recovery community health worker model linked with clinical substance abuse intervention.

Alan Melchior (PI), Tracy Cutter, Chris Kingsley.
“Evaluation of FIRST LEGO League”
Funder: U.S. FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology)
The FIRST LEGO League (FLL) involves over 135,000 students in 42 countries in robotics competitions based on the LEGO Mindstorms robotics kits. This study will evaluate a sample of FLL teams in the United States and Canada to assess the impacts of the program on participant interest and understanding of science and technology, as well as a core set of life skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and project design and management.

Alan Melchior (Co-PI), Cathy Burack (Co-PI)
“Management of Learn and Serve America Reporting System (LASSIE)”
Funder: Abt Associates/Corporation for National and Community Service
This is a renewal (for up to 5 years) of a contract to manage the annual reporting system for the Learn and Serve America program, which provides grants to K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and community-based organizations to promote youth involvement in service-learning.

Jennifer Perloff (PI), Carol Prost
“Behavioral Health and Housing Stability”
Funder: SAMHSA/Duffy Health Center
This study will evaluate an intensive case management project at a Cape Cod health center for the homeless.

Thomas Shapiro (PI), Sandra Venner, Delia Kimbrel, Rebecca Loya
“Building Assets and Addressing Racial Wealth Disparities”
Funder: The Hyams Foundation
The lead agency working in collaboration with the Massachusetts Association of Community Action (MASSCAP) and the Midas Collaborative, IASP will be providing research and community engagement support to the work of the Massachusetts Asset Development Commission efforts and produce the Commission’s Interim and Final Reports.

Donald Shepard (PI), Migda Dieppa (consultant), Binod Sah (consultant)
“Economic Analysis of Dengue in Puerto Rico”
Funder: Sanofi Pasteur
This project is combining patient interviews, surveillance data, and a novel hand-held data acquisition to study the costs of dengue in Puerto Rico in cooperation with the US Centers for Disease Control.

Donald Shepard (PI), Jeffrey Prottas, Stacey Ellender, Cindy Thomas, Khitam Hammad
“Study of Frozen Embryo Donation and Adoption: Economic Analysis”
Funder: DHHS, subcontract to QED Group LLC (Bongiovanni)
Heller is conducting the economic analysis related to the donation and adoption of frozen embryos as an additional alternative for infertile women to become parents.

Donald Shepard (PI), Aung Lwin
“Reinforcing Therapist Performance”
Funder: NIAAA, subcontract to Chestnut Health Systems
This is a 3-year economic analysis of a randomized trial of incentives to counselors providing an evidence-based treatment to adolescents with substance misuse.

Cindy Parks Thomas (PI), Donald Shepard, Timothy Martin, William Stason, Christopher Tompkins
“Impact of Chronic Obstructive Airway Disease”
Funder: GlaxoSmithKline
This study will examine health care utilization in Medicare Fee-For-Service beneficiaries diagnosed with Chronic Obstructive Airway disease. The findings will inform effective health policy and stimulate health industry innovations in developing cost saving improvements in health care for COAD. The findings will also identify population cohorts for targeted intervention by organized health care systems.
Recent Presentations


As convenor of the Economics of Aging Interest Group for the Gerontological Society of America, Christine Bishop organized and chaired a symposium at the November 2008 Annual Meeting entitled “Get What We Pay For: Public Payment, Private Markets, and Elder Services,” bringing together three speakers on the economics of payment and other policies toward three types of services provided to elders: nursing home services, assisted living services, and prescription drugs. She also chaired the Interest Group meeting.


**Hughes, D.** Forums on Youth Aging out of DCF Care: Suffolk University Law School, Boston, MA October 2008; The Cape Cod Foundation, Hyannis, MA, October 2008; Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts and Davis Foundation, Springfield, MA, October 2008; The Heller School, Waltham, MA, November 2008. Ms. Hughes convened the forums in her capacity as Director of the Massachusetts Task Force on Youth Aging Out of DCF Care.


In October 2008, Joan Kaufman participated in a meeting in Beijing organized by the *Lancet* (British Medical Journal) and China Medical Board in conjunction with the launch of a special issue of the *Lancet* on China’s Health System Reform in which she had an article on reproductive health (See Publications section). The launch meeting and the issue were the culmination of two years of collaboration by Chinese and international authors. The launch was chaired by China’s Minister of Health and was timed to coincide with the official release of China’s new health reform initiative, announced the same week.
Recent Presentations (cont.)

In October and November 2008, Joan Kaufman organized and participated in four meetings in China sponsored by the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative:

In November 2008, Joan Kaufman organized and participated in a dissemination meeting in Beijing, China for a Gender and Health Equity Network project which has been carried out in India, Mozambique and China. The dissemination meeting was aimed at getting recommendations from the study of poor rural communities in China into China's new health reform process. The China study has been carried out in collaboration with China's Ministry of Health and the dissemination meeting involved many senior policy level officials involved in formulating the new health plans.


Seidman, A. “How Ghana Changed Our Lives.” Presented at symposium of the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy, the University of Ghana, marking the university’s 60th anniversary, September 2008.


Public Engagement

Lawrence Bailis introduced Governor Deval Patrick to more than 1,000 AmeriCorps volunteers taking an oath of office at the Massachusetts AmeriCorps Opening Day Ceremony in November 2008.


Marion Howard is Environmental Adviser for CORALINA, a group that created and now manages Colombia’s first marine protected area, the Seaflower, an area in the Western Caribbean. Ms. Howard was quoted in item describing CORALINA’s efforts in the October 2008 issue of World Conservation, the magazine of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. CORALINA was chosen by World Conservation as one of “60 things that are changing conservation.” http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/issue3_wc_future1.pdf

Lisa Lynch appeared on PBS’ NewsHour with Jim Lehrer on November 7, 2008. During a segment entitled “Soaring Jobless Rate Offers Sign of Weak Economy,” she commented on the latest US unemployment figures and called for speedy policies to stem the recession.

Laurie Nsiah-Jefferson participated in a Health Care webinar discussion: “Health Care Reform and Eliminating Health Care Disparities,” December 30, 2008. President-elect Obama requested communities to conduct discussions and provide input into the health care reform effort. The webinar was organized to focus specifically on how health care reform should be conducted to eliminate racial/ethnic health care disparities. Results of the Webinar were submitted to the Obama Transition Team.

Huong Nguyen was tapped to lead the U.S. part of an international and collaborative study called the MIRIPS – the Mutual Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies – which is being carried out in 20 countries. It focuses on acculturation and race/ethnic relations and examines: (1) whether involvement in both the national and ethnic cultures promote confidence in one’s identity and mental health, and (2) whether there are relationships between this feeling of being secure (or being threatened) and mutual intercultural attitudes.

Thomas Shapiro and Tatjana Meschede’s work on the middle class was featured on “NBC Nightly News” with Brian Williams. NBC used the findings from the Institute on Assets and Social Policy’s recent Economic (In)Security report - in collaboration with Demos - to provide insight into how the middle class is faring in the current economic downturn, particularly African-American and Latino households. The segment included graphics showcasing our findings and an interview with Jennifer Wheary, Demos Senior Fellow and co-author of the report.

Thomas Shapiro was quoted in an electronic article on wealth and the foreclosure crisis in the St. Louis Beacon.  http://www.stlbeacon.org/region/scenes_from_the_economy_3. Dr. Shapiro was also quoted in the Enquete (Investigation section) of the French paper Les Echos talking about the disparities between black and white middle class Americans. http://elections-americaines.lesechos.fr/article.php?id_article=2265

Thomas Shapiro, with co-author Melvin L. Oliver, wrote “Sub-Prime as a Black Catastrophe,” which appeared in The American Prospect’s special report on narrowing racial divides. Despite legal gains in civil rights, asset inequality in America has been growing rapidly over the last twenty years. http://www.prospect.org//cs/articles;jsessionid=a_pNhW3QGJ1aKStEuY?article=sub_prime_as_a_black_catastrophe

During the fall of 2008, Thomas Shapiro served as a Commissioner on the Massachusetts Asset Commission and as an Advisor for the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Individual Development Accounts Advisory Panel.

Laurence Simon was interviewed for the University of California at Berkeley’s renowned series Conversations with History, which consists of one-hour unedited interviews with “distinguished men and women from all over the world talking about their lives and their work.”  http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/conversations.

Honors/Awards

Susan Curnan was elected Chair of the Board of the newly created “Roosevelt-Vanderbilt Legacy Federation” headquartered in Hyde Park, NY. The Federation is made up of five non-profit organizations that work in partnership with the National Park Service to preserve and manage the parks and develop educational programs based on the legacy of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt, and Frederick Vanderbilt.

Elenore Garton was appointed to the National Advisory Board to End Child Homelessness.

Dominic Hodgkin was chosen to be guest editor of the International Journal of Mental Health, for a special issue on “Economic crises and mental health.”
Constance Horgan has been invited to serve on the Planning Committee for the Integrating Services & Research for Co-Occurring Conditions Conference sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Constance Horgan has been invited to serve on the Advisory Group for the Innovations in Substance Abuse Prevention Treatment and Recovery Conference sponsored by the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Constance Horgan and Lorraine Klerman participated in an Expert Advisory Panel for the Community Health Mapping project sponsored by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation.

Mary Jo Larson accepted an appointment to co-chair the Program Committee for AMERSA’s 33rd National Conference in November 2009 (Association for Medical Education and Research in Substance Abuse).

Elizabeth Levy Merrick was invited as a grant proposal reviewer for Zon Mw, the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development.

Huong Nguyen is a Founding Member of the Society for Research in Child Development Asian Caucus, which was formed in early fall 2008.

Huong Nguyen was recognized as a promising young scholar by the Jacobs Foundation in Switzerland. The foundation focuses on productive youth development, and currently, is organizing a conference on immigrant youth and their policy implications. She was nominated by two international and leading scholars in her field, Dr. David Sam of Norway and Dr. John Berry of Canada.

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Laurie Nsiah-Jefferson was invited to be a Research Advisor to the Institute for Critical Studies in Gender and Health with Simon Fraser University (Vancouver, BC) and a Consortium of Canadian Universities. She was also appointed Chairman of the Diversity Committee of Brandeis’ Women’s Studies Research Center and to the Board of Directors of Massachusetts Citizens for Children.

Eve Wittenberg was appointed Associate Editor of Quality of Life Research, an International Journal of Quality of Life Aspects of Treatment, Care and Rehabilitation. The publication is the official journal of the International Society of Quality of Life Research.

Hannah Thomas.  “Reverse Redlining, Foreclosure and the Wealth Gap.” Presented at the National Convening on Subprime Lending, Foreclosures and Race, the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, October 2008.
Educational Programs


The Health Industry Forum held a forum entitled “Specialty Pharmaceuticals: Policy Solutions for Encouraging Access and Affordability” on October 2, 2008. Speakers included Sharon Levine, Associate Executive Director of Kaiser Permanente.

The Massachusetts Health Policy Forum, under the direction of Michael Doonan, held a forum entitled “Impact of the Presidential Election on Health Policy” on December 5, 2008. This event featured a presentation on exit polling results by Robert Blendon, Professor of Health Policy and Political Analysis, Harvard School of Public Health. The presentation was followed by a panel discussion featuring Philip W. Johnston, President of Johnston Associates and former Chair, Massachusetts State Democratic Party, and Kerry Healey, former Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts and Chair, Massachusetts State Republican Party.

For over ten years we have been providing courses, but not the formal degree, for students at Tufts University in its MD/MBA program. This October the Brandeis Board of Trustees approved a new dual-degree MD/MBA program so that Tufts MD students will now be official Brandeis students and will receive a Heller MBA degree. This dual degree program is the largest of its type in the United States.

The Schneider Institutes’ Institute for Behavioral Health co-sponsored the highly successful and very well attended 2008 Addiction Health Services Research (AHSR) Conference. The conference was organized by Constance Horgan and Sharon Reif, PhD ’02, and coordinated by Terri White, MBA ’05. AHSR welcomed researchers, practitioners, and policymakers interested in health services research as it relates to drug and alcohol dependence, as well as the intersection with mental health and other behavioral healthcare issues. AHSR 2008 focused on a theme of Advancing the Quality Agenda.

The Sillerman Center hosted a public debate entitled “Business-Inspired Philanthropy: Hope, Hype and Reality” on November 20, 2008. The event featured Michael Edwards, formerly a vice president of the Ford Foundation, discussing philanthrocapitalism with counterpoint from Joanna Jacobson, a Boston area philanthropist.