

# Heller Alumni

N E W S   A N D   V I E W S

A Magazine for the Alumni of The Heller School for Social Policy and Management

Fall 2006

## Special Issue on Children, Youth, and Families

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## Heller Events

Save the Date!  
November 3, 1:00–2:30 p.m.  
Irving Schneider and Family  
Building  
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

For the full schedule of  
upcoming events, see page 11.

For more information:  
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Phyllis Busansky, MMHS'78, the first Heller alum to run for Congress, pauses on the campaign trail in Florida.

## An Unexpected Reunion

Last year's massive earthquake in Pakistan, Kashmir, and northern India left 73,000 dead and two million homeless, ripping apart countless families. But it also reunited three Heller alumnae whose passion to help led them to join the global relief effort.

Puanani Forbes, MA/SID'02, Fatima Naqvi, MA/SID'02, and Amara Saeed, MA/SID'02, were close friends as students in Heller's Sustainable International Development Program. Though from opposite ends of the world, they forged a bond that lasted beyond graduation and shared an unshakable desire to help others.

For Forbes, a native Arizonan, it was a five-month visit to Nepal that convinced her she wanted to work internationally. For Naqvi and Saeed, who returned to their home country of Pakistan after graduating in 2002, the humanitarian issues were pressing.

Heller had prepared them all for demanding work on issues without easy solutions. Forbes took a job first with the World Food Program's Food for Education Program in Afghanistan just after the fall of the Taliban and later joined the Emergencies and Protection Unit of Save the Children. Saeed founded Strategic Solutions, a consulting organization involved in issues ranging from program evaluations to strategic planning and humanitarian responses. Naqvi became a humanitarian manager with Oxfam GB, a development, advocacy, and relief agency working to put an end to poverty worldwide.

### A world shaken

Then one of the most devastating earthquakes ever hit, and the three friends responded—separately, immediately, and wholeheartedly.



*Left to right: Fatima Naqvi, Amara Saeed, and Puanani Forbes, were brought back together by the nature of their work, and nature itself.*

"The earthquake was something very close to me—not just another news item one would read about, feel depressed about for a couple of hours, and then forget," says Saeed, who during the earthquake's immediate aftermath helped support her aunt and uncle—whose child was trapped beneath the rubble. Within twenty-four hours, Saeed and her husband had contacted friends and family, put together a team of twenty volunteers and ten truckloads of relief goods, and rushed toward one of the hardest-hit areas.

With Oxfam GB, Naqvi was also on the ground in Pakistan, providing plastic sheeting and tools so that thousands of people who were "trembling in wet clothes in the rain and snow" could quickly build temporary shelters to protect themselves from the harsh winter weather.

As part of Save the Children's emergency response team, Forbes was soon on a flight toward the

earthquake zone, where she would help distribute food, tents, blankets, and cooking utensils to affected families and supply medicines and meals to two field hospitals. She contacted her friends to let them know she was on her way.

"We were brought back together by the nature of our work," says Naqvi. In the evenings, after she and Forbes finished work for their agencies, they joined Saeed to collect, sort, repack, and ship supplies to different areas of Pakistan.

"We never imagined we would get an opportunity to work together like this after we graduated," says Saeed, "but as we've grown professionally the three of us have been able to share experiences, ideas, and thoughts."

Naqvi, grateful to be able to use skills and knowledge she gained at Heller in a constructive way, says, "The most important thing to me was that, while the whole country was shell-shocked and devastated by the tragedy, we were able to go out and make a difference despite our heavy hearts." ■

## Paying It Forward Receiving and Sharing Support Pays Dividends

**W**hen Jennifer Coplon, PhD'94, unexpectedly became a widow at age forty-four, she was halfway through her doctoral studies at Heller and a mother of two adolescent girls. Her life as she knew it had come to an abrupt end.

But Heller, and Coplon's dissertation chair Bill Crown in particular, helped her keep her eye on the prize.

"Bill knew how important it was to me to get my PhD. He truly cared about my well-being," says Coplon. "That really helped pull me through a difficult time."

Supporting and empowering people are consistent themes for Coplon, who has been on both the giving and receiving end. Growing up in the blue collar community of Fall River, Massachusetts, fueled her desire to become a social worker. Coplon's mother, whom she calls a frustrated feminist, encouraged her to have a career and be independent.

### Through advocacy, voice

After earning an MSW from Simmons College, Coplon spent twenty years working with family service agencies in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Boston.

"In my years working in human services I became even more aware of people who are disenfranchised," says Coplon. "Through advocacy and policy change, I learned to help those who had no voice."

Realizing that it would take additional training in policy and management to be an effective spokesperson for the underserved, Coplon came to The Heller School, where she learned analytical and research skills along with

management methods that enhanced her ability to impact lives on a macro level. Courses with Len Hausman on human services operations, with Jim Schulz on the economic issues of aging and retirement, and with Fredda Klein, PhD'84, on social factors of employment provided an inspiring cornerstone for Coplon's education. She received her degree at age forty-nine, eleven years after entering the program.

### The perfect candidate

Last year, Coplon returned to a leadership role in an agency that harkens back to her social work roots. The Child Care Resources Center (CCRC) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, recruited Coplon, whose strong background in family service work, combined with her experience in health care and fundraising at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and Tufts Health Care Institute, made her the perfect candidate.

"They recognized that the field of child care had to pay more attention to the health of children and families," says Coplon.

In addition to being a resource and referral agency for Cambridge and eight surrounding towns, CCRC provides services to improve the care and education of children, delivered by those with the greatest influence—parents and professional caregivers.

"I see child care as an enormously powerful way of reaching families who don't use other services and would otherwise be unreachable," says Coplon.

Empowered by her own mother, her Heller colleagues, and others, Coplon continues to "pay it forward" as the executive director of an agency that is committed to helping families. ■



Jennifer Coplon, PhD'94, at the Child Care Resource Center in Cambridge, Mass., where she is the executive director.

## Doing the Work She Loves

**K**atie Brandt, MM'04, works with numbers every day at the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund (NHCTF). Katie knows that behind every number there is a family with a story to be told and a child with a voice to be heard. In both her personal and professional life, she strives to keep children safe and families strong.

### Ten minutes from campus

As an undergraduate student at Saint Anselm College in New Hampshire, Brandt channeled her desire to help kids into a volunteer position with AmeriCorps, overseeing the community service activities of fellow students to staff Kids Cafe, a Salvation Army-sponsored soup kitchen for inner-city children. "Developing relationships with the children at Kids Cafe was a powerful experience because it made us realize issues of poverty and inequality were not far away; they were happening just ten minutes from campus," says Brandt, who received awards from both Saint Anselm and the Salvation Army for her work.

As former Heller School Dean Jack Shonkoff would later say, "Katie was destined to do great things." Shonkoff, who taught Brandt in class, said he could predict then that "her enthusiasm, dedication, and understanding of child policy issues would propel her forward in her career."



In her spare time, Brandt is a mentor to nine-year-old Ashley.

### Proving prevention works

At Heller, Brandt focused on early intervention, studying with experts in the field such as Shonkoff.

"Now that I'm out in the work world I see what a powerhouse Jack is," says Brandt.

When Shonkoff made a presentation to the New Hampshire legislature in fall 2005, Brandt was able to see firsthand the impact of his research on early childhood and family policy.

"I was treated like a celebrity when my colleagues saw me speaking with Jack after his presentation," she notes.

Today, Brandt is the family support outcomes director at NHCTF, an organization established by the New Hampshire legislature to lead child abuse prevention efforts. This puts her in the thick of the challenge of proving prevention works.

“Developing relationships with the children at Kids Cafe was a powerful experience because it made us realize issues of poverty and inequality were not far away.”

21,000 = The number of phone calls received by New Hampshire's child welfare agency in 2005 from citizens concerned with child safety.

500 = The number of parents surveyed by the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund in 2005 to examine the impact of family support programs.

9 = The age of Katie Brandt's Junior Friend through a local mentoring program in Concord, New Hampshire.

"It's hard to prove why something *didn't* happen," says Brandt. "Our home visitors and parent educators see positive changes in families on a daily basis, but those stories are not enough when you are talking to funders and legislators. You need evidence-based data to get people's attention."

Gathering these data is exactly what NHCTF is doing. Brandt was instrumental in collecting information from 500 New Hampshire parents to measure whether families who receive services show increases across seven protective factors identified with preventing child abuse and neglect.

#### Measuring progress

"Research has shown that there are definite risk factors that lead to abuse, but there are also protective factors, such as supportive peer relationships or knowledge of child development, that can counteract those risks," says Brandt. In 2005, NHCTF found that families reported improvement, at statistically significant levels, in all seven identified protective factors after receiving support services.

When Brandt is not volunteering as a mentor for nine-year-old Ashley, she also works as a consultant for the Friends National Resource Center, working with child abuse prevention programs across the nation to develop best practices in peer review and



Brandt poses with New Hampshire Governor John Lynch for the *News and Views* camera.

agency outcomes. Last March her work brought her to Washington, D.C., where she made a presentation at the annual grantee meeting for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) programs. Brandt likes keeping one foot in the direct service world, since it grounds her work on the policy and research level.

#### Dreaming bigger

"So much of what I do relates directly back to the classes I took at Heller," says Brandt. "I loved it when I was there, but I didn't really know just how wonderful Heller was until I left. Heller has helped me to dream a little bigger about the impact that I can make through my personal and professional life."

To learn more about NHCTF, go to [www.nhctf.org](http://www.nhctf.org). ■



Through her volunteer work, Brandt enjoys staying connected with direct service.

## In Search of the Big Picture



“There are so many NGOs in India that identify a problem and jump in to try to do good, but too often they fail to uncover the root causes of the problem.”

**A**s the old adage goes, it's sometimes hard to see the forest for the trees. In India, as elsewhere, that often means social ills are tackled with the best of intentions, but without ever getting to the root of the problem.

A case in point: while studying sociology at Jawaharlal Nehru University in India, Bindu Sunny, MA'04, analyzed educational services for the children of sex workers in the red light district of Delhi, India.

### No future

“Child care workers assumed that these children had no future, so often the educational strategies employed failed to provide hope and optimism about a way out of that lifestyle,” says Sunny. “There are so many NGOs in India that identify a problem and jump in to try to do good, but too often they fail to uncover the root causes of the problem. They feed the hungry, but invest very little in inquiring why people are hungry in the first place.”

Sunny's search for a holistic development perspective led her to Heller in 2002.

### Connecting the dots

Already a professional when she arrived at Heller, Sunny was nevertheless hungry to learn. A microcredit course with Professor Jeffrey Ashe got her thinking about ways to empower people to become economically self-sufficient. She started to connect the dots.

“If women are able to start their own businesses, they may not have to send their children to work to help support

the family. I saw that microcredit could have an impact not only on the woman receiving the loan, but also the entire family.”

Sunny found an internship project working for the International Labour Organization (ILO) in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. The ILO brought together employers, trade unions, and civil society to ensure a child-free workplace and at the same time lobby for competitive wages for adult workers. Sunny authored a paper analyzing child rights and the strategy of the ILO to end child labor. Though this was important work, she felt it fell short of attacking the root problem.

Her goal was to work with an international organization that focused on the big picture. She knew that education was significant in lifting people out of poverty, but if the education was not relevant to their day-to-day lives, parents would not likely be inspired to let their children attend school.

“How is geometry or the planet system going to help a poor field worker or an out-of-school adolescent girl in India?” she asked.

### Designing relevant programs

Worldwide, more than 121 million children do not attend school, many because extreme poverty forces them to forfeit education for work that contributes to the family's income. While working in Andhra Pradesh, home to more child laborers than almost anywhere else in India, Sunny became aware of World Education's project preparing girl child laborers rescued from the cotton seed industry to enroll and stay in formal

## Protecting the Vulnerable

school, where they could also avoid exploitation by employers and hazardous working conditions that pose severe risks to their physical and psychological development. World Education's approach of using education as a preventive strategy fit right into Sunny's idea of building capacity at the grass roots to empower the community to address development problems. World Education engages teachers, parents, and community members in making education more relevant to the child.

"There's a tremendous opportunity cost to sending a child to school, so it's critical to address the relevance of education or you won't get far in the race," says Sunny. Relevant information on agriculture, nutrition, and hygiene has been integrated into the existing curriculum, and teachers are being trained in implementing this in the classroom. Sunny was hired as a research intern on the pilot study that measured the impact of the program on the children's education and overall development.

### Internship turns into a job

Last year Sunny transitioned from her internship into a job as a program officer in the Boston office of World Education. She acts as a liaison between the home office and the field office in India, providing financial management and monitoring of projects, writing proposals, and assisting with program development.

"World Education's approach makes sense to me," says Sunny. "My current job incorporates the disparate interests I was trying to pull together as I marched through my education searching for a way to find the bigger picture." ■

**C**hild abuse and neglect, obesity, chronic stress from growing up in disadvantaged environments, and developmental disabilities are just some of the problems confronting children in America today. The numbers are staggering: more than one in six teens is overweight—triple the rate of twenty years ago. Almost 50,000 children under eighteen have a developmental disability or special health care need.

Faculty, researchers, and students at Heller's Institute for Child, Youth, and Family Policy (ICYFP) are chipping away at these troubling statistics as they strive to develop social policies that will reap benefits in areas as diverse as teen pregnancy and developmental disabilities. One of four Heller research institutes, the ICYFP—under the direction of Lorraine Klerman—unites experts from across disciplines to conduct policy and management research, promote active public engagement, and educate tomorrow's leaders. Recently, the ICYFP contracted to assist the CVS/pharmacy Charitable Trust with its All Kids Can™ initiative, aimed at helping children with disabilities learn, play, and succeed.

Child abuse has been a focus of Heller School research since 1970, when David Gil published his pioneering study "Violence Against Children." Today, faculty members examine ways to prevent child abuse by intervening at the first allegation of maltreatment and ameliorating its impact by referring abused young children to early intervention services.

Elizabeth Goodman, a leading expert in adolescent health, conducts groundbreaking research on the

complex roles that social disadvantage and parent education play in teen health and the development of cardiovascular disease, the nation's number one killer. Understanding how social policies contribute to health disparities is a major goal of this work.

The ICYFP is also home to two centers. The Nathan and Toby Starr Center for Mental Retardation, led by Marji Erickson Warfield, PhD'91, works to develop social policies that improve the lives of those affected by developmental disabilities. The Starr Center's long-term study of the effects of early intervention services on children with developmental disabilities and their families is unique in the field.

The ICYFP's second center, directed by Susan P. Curnan, is the Center for Youth and Communities (CYC). Its mission is to use science and experience to create conditions where all youth can thrive and successfully transition to healthy, productive, and economically viable adulthood. Through a mix of research and management projects, the CYC aims to close the education achievement gap among young people in the United States; to improve youths' and adults' access to, and advancement and retention in, the twenty-first century workplace; and strengthen youths' connection with their families, schools, and communities.

Like the alumni profiled in this issue, the professionals who carry out the ICYFP's important work are committed to making knowledge productive and giving voice to those who need it most.

## Thank You, Heller Alumni Donors



Pictured are a few of the more than twenty-five Heller students who received book bag awards thanks to your generous gifts to the Heller Alumni Annual Fund. We are thrilled to announce that we surpassed our goal of raising \$60,000 for the Heller Alumni Annual Fund and will be able to help a greater number of students in the coming year.

For more information, please contact the Heller Office of Development and Alumni Relations at 781-736-3806 or visit [www.heller.brandeis.edu](http://www.heller.brandeis.edu), where you can make a gift online.

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\* Heller Alumni Association Board Member or Regional Chair  
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## Welcome to Our Newest Alumni



On May 21, 2006, more than 140 Heller students received their degrees and joined the ranks of 1,800 Heller alumni. Student representatives from all four of Heller's academic programs shared the stage with Congressman Barney Frank to give final words of advice to their fellow classmates. The following excerpts from their speeches eloquently express what their time at Heller meant to them. Pictured clockwise from top left are: Junya Zhu, MS'06; Tamara Tai, MBA'06; Dean Stuart Altman (*left*) congratulates Stephen Gulley, PhD'06; Rhoderick Samonte, MA/SID'06.



### Rhoderick Samonte, MA/SID'06

"To follow the metaphor that the world is flat leads us to sweep our waste over the edge of the world, but there is no edge. We tend to push people over the edge when we don't want them because of race, gender, religion, and other differences, but there is no edge. The world is round; we are interconnected. Studying at Heller taught us that the more we push people and our waste over the edge, the more it will come back on the other side, and we had better watch out, because sooner or later it will hit our very own backs."

### Junya Zhu, MS'06

"Before I came to Heller, I worked in hospitals for more than ten years. I was excited to see the new progress in medical technology. But I was also sad because I saw many times that poor people had to give up their treatment or be discharged prematurely just because they could not pay their medical bills. I observed too many instances of health care disparities. I realized that the health challenges of today and tomorrow cannot be solved by medicine alone. I wondered, 'Why is this happening? What can we do to decrease the disparity? How can we face this challenge?' I had been asking these questions, but no textbooks could give me answers. I came to The Heller School with these questions."

### Stephen Gulley, PhD'06

"We are now empowered by the knowledge we have gained, we are aware of its limits, and we must remain instruments of social change. We have our work cut out for us. Now, more than ever, we need valid, reliable, and meaningful studies of the vulnerable among us, the problems they face, and the strengths they possess. Now, more than ever, we need a well-educated polity that can distinguish principled arguments from political sophistry. Now, more than ever, we need public policies based not on faith or mere belief, but on evidence."

### Tamara Tai, MBA'06

"For me, the awarding of a master's degree is no mere individual accomplishment but a mandate to do great work on behalf of others. Education has always been a privilege to me—the opportunity to address you today really should not have been in my future. My parents grew up poor on the island of Jamaica and came to the United States sharing in every immigrant's hope for a better life. Although unfamiliar with American culture and rules, they were determined to clear a path for me, their only child, toward academic achievement and great success. Their resolve and determination created opportunities for me that they could only have dreamed of—opportunities that I hope I and my children never take for granted. It is these same kinds of opportunities that I am determined to create for others with what I have learned at The Heller School."

## Upcoming Alumni Events

**October 24, 2006**

6:30–8:00 p.m.

### An Evening with Professor Andy Hahn, PhD'78

Professor Hahn will be the director of Heller's new Master of Public Policy (MPP) degree program, which—pending approval by Brandeis faculty and the Board of Trustees—may be offered in September 2007.

Home of Gail Robinson, PhD'80, Heller Alumni Association Board president

Washington, D.C.

For more information contact Norma DeMattos at 781-736-4827 or ndemat@brandeis.edu

**November 1, 2006**

Noon–1:30 p.m.

### "Supersize Me: Social and Biologic Determinants of America's Obesity Epidemic"

**Downtown Boston lunch series, cosponsored with Brandeis University Alumni Club of Greater Boston**

Elizabeth Goodman, MD, Heller professor

Brown Rudnick Berlack Israels LLP

One Financial Center, Boston

RSVP: 781-736-4041

**November 3, 2006**

1:00 p.m.

### Irving Schneider and Family Building Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Reception and tours of the facility to follow; watch your mail for more details.

**November 6, 2006**

6:30–8:00 p.m.

### Heller Alumni Reception

**Boston event for those attending the American Public Health Association (APHA) 2006 Annual Meeting**

Boston Convention & Exhibition Center

415 Summer Street, Boston

For more information contact Norma DeMattos at 781-736-4827 or ndemat@brandeis.edu

**November 14, 2006**

7:00–9:00 p.m.

### "Massachusetts Health Care Reform: A Blueprint for the Rest of the Country?"

**New York Heller Alumni event featuring Heller Dean Stuart Altman**

Brandeis House, New York

For more information contact Norma DeMattos at 781-736-4827 or ndemat@brandeis.edu

**November 15, 2006**

7:30 a.m.

### Panel Discussion: Strategic Planning Isn't Dead Yet—A New Era for Nonprofit Strategy

**Panelists include: Thomas A. McLaughlin, Heller MBA adjunct lecturer and author of *Nonprofit Strategic Positioning***

**Jody Hoffer Gittell, PhD, Heller MBA program director, associate professor**

Schneider Building; breakfast will be served.

For more information contact Norma DeMattos at 781-736-4827 or ndemat@brandeis.edu



Andy Hahn will speak to Washington, D.C., alumni in October about an MPP degree program being planned for fall 2007.



Elizabeth Goodman is the featured speaker at the Downtown Boston Lunch Series on November 1 at noon.

### **Has the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy led to improvements in educational outcomes for all students, or has it led to a focus on testing or perhaps other unintended consequences?**

*Viewpoints is a regular column in Heller Alumni News and Views featuring alumni responses to current policy and management issues. Want to chime in on a Viewpoints debate? Send your name and areas of expertise to Norma DeMattos at [ndemat@brandeis.edu](mailto:ndemat@brandeis.edu).*

**Roblyn Anderson Brigham, PhD'01**  
Partner  
Brigham Nahas Research Associates  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Under NCLB, students take more tests, so data are abundant, but results are frequently used in a simplistic manner—one that does not automatically lead to improved educational outcomes. Test data can (and should) be useful to educators. Along with other performance measures, results help identify underperforming schools, weak curricular areas, and students who need additional support. But too often test scores are used as one-dimensional, “thumbs-up” or “thumbs-down” assessments of the quality of an entire district, school, teacher, or student without shedding light on the complexities involved in raising student achievement.

**Mark Carlson, MBA'03**  
Executive Director  
Beverly School for the Deaf  
Beverly, Massachusetts

I continue to see a disparity among local outcomes and in district adherence to NCLB. Many districts, schools, and teachers are successfully implementing NCLB to the benefit of students. But districts with limited resources or leadership continue to struggle. The media have presented a biased perspective of NCLB, focusing on the ongoing controversy about standardized testing while neglecting to report on good teachers who are aptly tying curriculum frameworks and classroom work to a standardized level of output. Bottom line, NCLB is not effective for all, but it has potential.

**Melissa Gallagher, MBA'04**  
Research Associate  
Children's Alliance of New Hampshire  
Concord, New Hampshire

While I am doubtful that NCLB has led to any real, positive outcomes for students, it *has* led to significant and, in some ways, unfortunate changes in the way states, school districts, and individual schools approach standardized testing. A big concern of mine is single point-in-time testing, which is not the best way to measure student progress. Formative testing is needed in order to understand a student's progress throughout the school year. In addition, long delays in test scoring and reporting test results back to schools have impeded their ability to conduct the necessary interventions for students whose performance is low in certain areas.



## New Jobs, Degrees, Directions

**Anne Brisson, PhD'99**, is an associate research scientist at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, where she is working on a study funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse on HIV prevention with homeless mothers. Brisson also continues to work on HIV prevention projects in Central Asia (ab2677@columbia.edu).

**Phyllis Busansky, MMHS'78**, is running for a congressional seat in Florida's Ninth District. (See busanskyforcongress.com.)

**Melissa Gallagher, MBA'04**, is a research associate at Children's Alliance of New Hampshire, a statewide child advocacy organization (melissa@moonrivers.com).

**Alejandro Garcia, PhD'80**, was appointed director of the School of Social Work in the College of Human Services and Health Professions at Syracuse University, where he has been a social work professor for 28 years. Garcia has also been named chair of the AARP's National Policy Council (agarcia@syr.edu).

**Terrence Gargiulo '90, MMHS'93**, is an international speaker, author, organizational development consultant, and group process facilitator. He is a five-time author whose publications include three books on the role of stories in business. For more information on his titles, go to [www.makingstories.net](http://www.makingstories.net). Gargiulo lives in Monterey, California, with his wife and two children (terrence@makingstories.net).

**Eric Geers, MA'05**, is a public health promotion advisor with Oxfam GB in Chad, Africa. As part of a team of local and international workers, Geers is providing humanitarian assistance for people displaced from the Darfur conflict area in Sudan.

**Surabhi Jain, MA'06**, is a workforce development analyst at the National Council of La Raza in Washington, D.C. The National Council of La Raza is the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States (sjain@nclr.org).

**Agne Kurutyte, MA'05**, is a project manager for the Human Rights Monitoring Institute in Lithuania. The institute was founded in 2003 as a government watchdog promoting an open, democratic society in Lithuania through the consolidation of human rights principles (agniete.x@mailcity.com).



**Heller's Institute on Assets and Social Policy has partnered with the Florida Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition (FMCRC) to help build economies, workforce, and homeownership in Florida's minority communities. Representatives from Heller and FMCRC gathered on campus this summer to sign the agreement. Left to right: Karen Landry, director of FMCRC's War on Poverty Initiative; Marty Wyngaarden Krauss, PhD'81, Brandeis University provost and Heller professor; Thomas Shapiro, director of the Institute on Assets and Social Policy and Pokross Professor of Law and Social Policy at Heller; Tomas Lares, member of FMCRC's Board of Directors; and Stuart Altman, dean of the Heller School.**

**Zakayo Lenawamuro, MA'03**, is general manager of Kageno Kenya Trust, an integrated development program that seeks to transform communities suffering from AIDS, impoverishment, genocide, and limited access to health care, clean water, and education into places of opportunity and hope (zlejipis@yahoo.com).

**Lavonne Nkomo, MM'01**, moved back to New England from Washington, D.C., to accept a position as positive behavioral interventions and support coordinator with Rhode Island College's Paul V. Sherlock Center for Disabilities. Nkomo also welcomed a new addition to her family, Lalah Nkomo, born on March 5, 2005 (lnkomo@ric.edu).



## Heller Alum Runs for Critical Congressional Seat in Florida

**H**eller alumna Phyllis Busansky, MMHS'78, is hoping to help win the House back for the Democrats in this November's congressional election. Busansky is running in Florida's Ninth Congressional District against Republican Gus Bilirakis, who hopes to replace his father, the former twelve-term district representative. Most observers did not initially anticipate a close race since this district traditionally votes Republican, but, after Busansky reported strong fundraising figures for the first quarter of 2006, national political observers upgraded her chances of winning the seat. The Democratic

Congressional Campaign Committee identified Busansky's candidacy as one of twenty-two "red-to-blue" opportunities nationwide.

Busansky was Hillsborough County Commissioner from 1989 to 1997. In 1995, *Governing* magazine named her "Public Official of the Year." She was also the first executive director of Florida's welfare-to-work agency. As far as *News and Views* knows, she is the first Heller alum to run for Congress. For information about her campaign, go to [www.busanskyforcongress.com](http://www.busanskyforcongress.com).



Heller lecturer Brenda Anderson and Heller/Hornstein professor Len Saxe received the Teaching and Mentoring Awards respectively. The winners of these awards are nominated and voted on by Heller students.

**Shannon Oliver, MA'05**, is a project manager for Catholic Relief Services. Originally assigned to work improving infrastructure and building and repairing schools in the Herat area of Afghanistan, Oliver was pulled from his post to respond to the massive earthquake in Pakistan. He is currently based in Kashmir ([shannonoliver19@hotmail.com](mailto:shannonoliver19@hotmail.com)).

**Eric Sax '83, MBA'01**, left his position as director of nuclear medicine and PET/CT at Massachusetts' Newton-Wellesley Hospital in January to start his own diagnostic imaging business, the Imaging Institute, which now has two offices in Rhode Island (Cranston and Warwick); a third site is under development. Sax serves on the CMS Carrier Advisory and Interspecialty committees of the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) and is a delegate to both MMS and the Massachusetts Hospital Association ([esax@partners.org](mailto:esax@partners.org)).

**Laura Scarlett, MBA'05**, is a program assistant in the New England office of the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE). Heller alums Leslie Koch, MMHS'93, and Elizabeth McDonald, PhD'05, also work at NFTE, which teaches entrepreneurship to young people from low-income communities to improve their business, academic, and life skills ([laura.scarlett@nfte.com](mailto:laura.scarlett@nfte.com)).

**Mark Sciegaj, PhD'96**, was appointed dean of graduate and professional studies at Lasell College, where he is also the director of the RoseMary B. Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies and associate professor of public policy and management. In May, Sciegaj was elected president of the Massachusetts Gerontology Association, whose mission is to bring together academics, service providers,

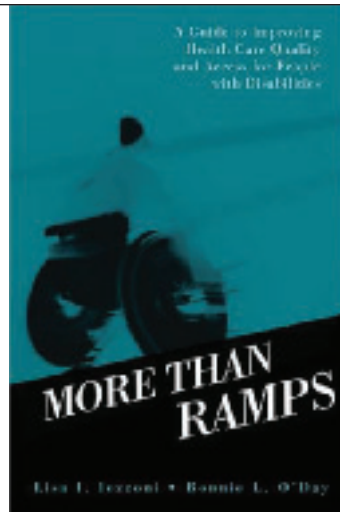
and public policymakers to address aging-related issues and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from academic research to day-to-day practice (msciegaj@lasell.edu).

**Nina Silverstein, PhD'80**, was promoted to full professor of gerontology at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

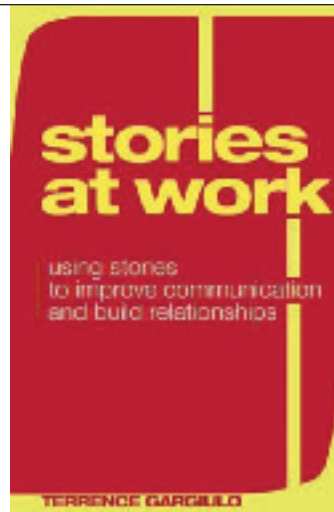
**Sam Simon, PhD'05**, is a senior researcher at Mathematica Policy Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts (ssimon@mathematica-mpr.com).

**Kerry Smith, MBA'05**, is development manager at Portland West, a social service agency working to eliminate poverty and build community in Portland, Maine. She is also the first executive director of Community Harvest, a community-building organization that holds monthly and holiday dinners and provides financial assistance to low-income families (ksmith@portlandwest.org).

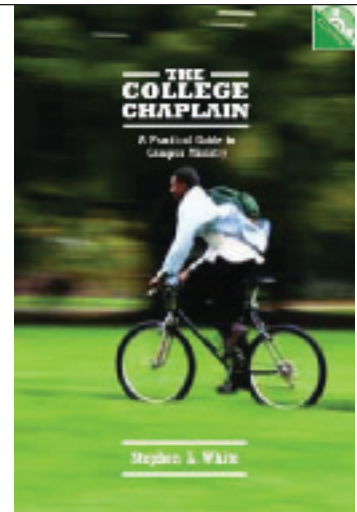
**Dinah Zeltser, MA/MM'00**, completed her assignment in the North Caucasus for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which has retained her as community services officer for Moyo, Uganda (dinah\_z@yahoo.com).



**Bonnie O'Day, PhD'98**



**Terrence Gargiulo '90, MMHS'93**



**Stephen White, PhD'85**

## Publications

**Jim Lurie, MMHS'82, PhD'86**, wrote a report titled "Parenting a Young Child with Behavior Problems: Parents' Experiences with Webster-Stratton Parent Training," published by the Regional Child Protection Research Center at the University of Trondheim in Norway, where Lurie has been a senior researcher since 2003 (jim.lurie@samfunn.ntnu.no).

**Bonnie O'Day, PhD'98**, is the co-author of *More Than Ramps: A Guide to Improving Health Care Quality and Access for People with Disabilities*, published by Oxford University Press (bo29@cornell.edu).

**Joyce Pulcini, PhD'87**, is the co-author of "Determining Criteria for Excellence in Nurse Practitioner Education: Use of the Delphi Technique," published in the March 2006 issue of *Nursing Outlook* (pulcinjo@bc.edu).

**Stephen White, PhD'85**, wrote *The College Chaplain: A Practical Guide to Campus Ministry*, published by Pilgrim Press. White is the Episcopal chaplain at Princeton University (swhite@princeton.edu).

## Awards/Honors/Boards/Grants

**Denise Dabney '72, MMHS'81, PhD'00**, was elected to the board of directors for the Massachusetts Teen Pregnancy Alliance (denise.dabney.jcs@ci.boston.ma.us).

**Victor Kane, PhD'91**, received a grant to study Oregon's Health Care Report Card, an assessment of Oregon's health care

market and public policy programs to serve the low-income population. Kane is an assistant professor of business at Pacific University in Oregon (vkane@pacificu.edu).

**Valerie Leiter, PhD'01**, was appointed a scholar by the William T. Grant Foundation. Each year the foundation provides support to four to six promising researchers from across the country working in the field of youth development. Leiter is an assistant professor of sociology at Simmons College (valerie.leiter@simmons.edu).

**Joyce Pulcini, PhD'87**, received the Outstanding Nurse Practitioner Educator Award from the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties at its annual meeting in April. Pulcini is an associate professor at Boston College School of Nursing (pulcinjo@bc.edu).

Share your news with Heller alumni—contact Norma DeMattos at [ndemat@brandeis.edu](mailto:ndemat@brandeis.edu) or call 781-736-4827.

**Jeanette Takamura, PhD'85**, received the Ollie Randall Award from the National Council on Aging for her outstanding contributions toward advancing the cause of aging. Takamura is the first female dean of the Columbia University School of Social Work ([jctakamura@aol.com](mailto:jctakamura@aol.com)).

**Julio Urbina, PhD'01**, was appointed to the board of trustees of St. John's Riverside Hospital in Yonkers, New York ([jurbina@samuels.org](mailto:jurbina@samuels.org)).

**Joseph Wronka, PhD'92**, was the keynote speaker at the Social Welfare Action Alliance's annual conference. The title of his talk was "Human Rights and Social Justice Challenges for 2006 and Beyond." Wronka is a professor of social work at Springfield College ([jwronka@spfldcol.edu](mailto:jwronka@spfldcol.edu)).



**Stephane Acel, MBA'02**, talks to **Diana Marginean, MA/SID'03**, at the Distinguished Management event in April 2006.



Heller events provide opportunities for (left to right) **Lynne Sullivan, MBA'02**, **Virginia Fitzhugh, MM'03**, and **Roblyn Brigham, PhD'01**, to network.

## Births/Marriages

**Oksana Bondar, MBA'03**, was married in October 2004 and welcomed her first child, Solomon Turchin, in December 2005. Bondar is director of organizational learning at Boston's Steppingstone Foundation ([obondar@tsf.org](mailto:obondar@tsf.org)).

**Roblyn Anderson Brigham, PhD'01**, and her husband, Peter, welcomed their second daughter, Jennifer, on July 10, 2006.

**Eric Cahow, PhD'04**, and his wife, Jane, welcomed their son, Jay Matthew, in May 2006.

**Debra Feldstein, MMHS'96**, and her husband, Ken, welcomed a baby son, Jonah Benjamin Feldstein Chizinsky, on December 5, 2005.

**Erin Yale Horwitz, MM'98**, welcomed her second daughter, Amelia Hadara, in April 2006 ([eyale@nmff.org](mailto:eyale@nmff.org)).

**Dave Segal '78, MMHS'83**, and his wife, Wendy, celebrated the birth of their son, Jacob, on March 23, 2006 ([dave\\_segal@harvardpilgrim.org](mailto:dave_segal@harvardpilgrim.org)).

## Faculty/Staff Notes

**Stuart Altman**, dean and Sol C. Chaikin Professor of National Health Policy, and **Michael Doonan, PhD '02**, assistant professor, are co-authors of "Can Massachusetts Lead the Way in Health Care Reform?," published in the May 18, 2006, issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

**Jody Hoffer Gittel**, associate professor, won the 2005 Sloan Industry Studies Best Book Award for her book *The Southwest Airlines Way: Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve High Performance*. Gittel recently received tenure at Heller and was appointed director of Heller's MBA program.

**Joan Kaufman**, senior scientist at the Schneider Institutes, co-edited and contributed chapters to the publication *AIDS and Social Policy in China*, published by Harvard University Asia Center Publications. (See the article on Joan Kaufman on page 18.)

**Phyllis Mutschler, PhD '85**, director of the Program on Women and Aging at The Heller School, received the Louis Lowy Award from the Massachusetts Gerontology Association in recognition of her contributions to the field of aging in Massachusetts.

**Cindy Parks Thomas, PhD '00**, senior scientist at Heller's Schneider Institutes for Health Policy, was awarded the Medical Scientific Program Committee Award from the American Society of Addiction Medicine for submitting the best overall abstract for its annual medical-scientific conference, held in San Diego in May 2006.

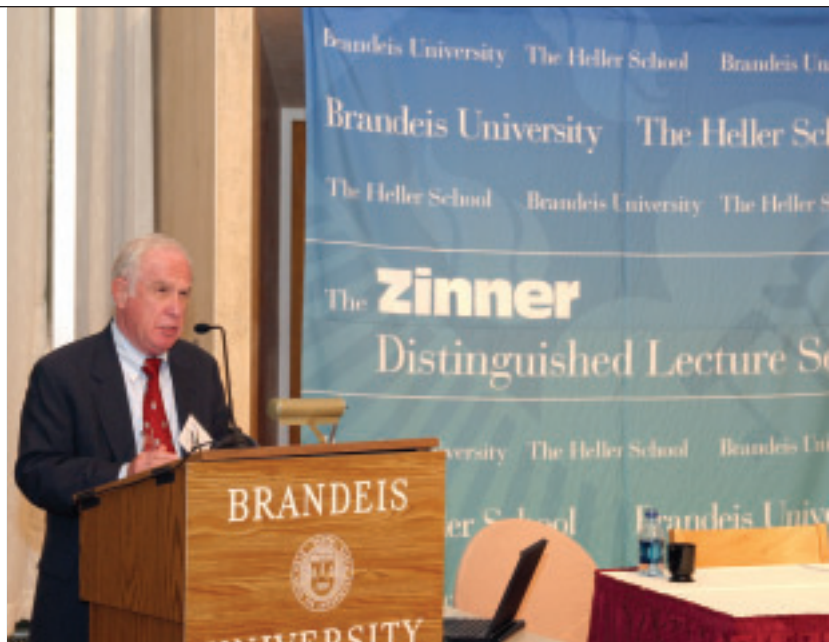
## In Memoriam

**Sarah Adelman '04, MBA '05**, died on July 24, 2006. A memorial service will be held at Brandeis University. For more information, contact Alwina Bennett at 781-736-3546.

**Joan Harris, PhD '77**, passed away on December 15, 2005, at age 77.

**Patti Marcus, MMHS '85**, passed away on December 28, 2005. She was 49.

**Merle W. Mudd, PhD '69**, passed away on May 21, 2006, at age 84.



## Altman named dean of Heller School—round two!

**S**tuart Altman, who has been serving as interim dean of Heller since Jack Shonkoff stepped down in the spring of 2005, has agreed to remain at the helm a while longer.

Brandeis University President Jehuda Reinhartz and Provost Marty Krauss, prevailed upon Altman to stay on after a search for a permanent dean failed to yield a replacement for Shonkoff, who led the school from 1995 to 2005. No newcomer to the challenges involved, Altman previously spent more than 15 years as Heller dean and was interim president of Brandeis in the early 1990s.

Despite an assiduous search led by Pokross Professor Tom Shapiro, none of the three finalists who emerged from the effort achieved the unanimous backing of the university administration and the search committee.

Commencing a second search to identify a dean has precedent at Heller. Both Altman and Shonkoff were selected only after a first search failed to produce a clear choice. A new search will be conducted.

**Heller Senior Scientist Joan Kaufman has worked in the health, gender, and development fields for nearly thirty years, most recently focusing on the AIDS epidemic. We talked to her about the plight of AIDS orphans in rural China.**

“If I can help the Chinese government understand what we have learned about AIDS in the last 25 years, I will have made some headway in fighting this terrible epidemic.”

**News and Views:** *You have lived and worked in China off and on for ten years since 1980. What piqued your interest in China?*

**Joan Kaufman:** I grew up in New Jersey in the 1970s, well before I or anyone I knew had any reason to be interested in China. But when I was studying art history and calligraphy as an undergraduate at Trinity College, I became intrigued by China and shifted to an intercultural studies major and eventually transferred to the University of California at Berkeley to get more China courses. After completing a master's in Asian studies at U.C. Berkeley, I bowed to parental concerns about what in the world I would do with a Chinese studies degree, so I also earned a master's in health and medical sciences. My focus on health and family planning and my interest in China intersected.

**N&V:** *When did you first travel to China?*

**J.K.:** Because I was fluent in Chinese and had a background in family planning, the United Nations Population Fund hired me immediately upon graduation from my master's programs to be the first international program officer in China. I stayed there for four years.

**N&V:** *What brought you back to China?*

**J.K.:** I went back again with support from the Rockefeller Foundation to do the research for my doctoral dissertation at the Harvard School of Public Health. My research involved public health issues in China. I traveled to twelve rural villages just after the

one-child policy was enacted to look at implementation and enforcement of the new policy. In 1996, I was recruited by the Ford Foundation to be their gender and reproductive health program officer in China.

**N&V:** *Did that position provide the jumping-off point for a career focus on AIDS?*

**J.K.:** Part of my job at the Ford Foundation was mobilizing a response to the growing AIDS epidemic. In the 1990s, AIDS had spread in central China because poor farmers were trying to supplement their incomes by getting paid for blood donations. The blood samples were all mixed together before the plasma was extracted and then the contaminated blood was injected back into the donors. About a million people regularly donated blood before the blood donation stations in central China were closed by the government in 1998, leaving some villages with 60 percent of the adult population infected.

**N&V:** *What was the impact on children?*

**J.K.:** Between 2001 and 2003, the number of children around the world who lost parents to AIDS increased from 11.5 million to 15 million. UNICEF estimates China to have 78,000 AIDS orphans. It is predicted that by 2010 another 260,000 children in China will become orphans. The main response to the AIDS orphan crisis in China has been to build AIDS orphanages, which is not in line with international best practices that promote community-based care approaches.

**N&V:** *What inspired you to become involved?*

**J.K.:** A colleague—a former grantee from my Ford Foundation days—was working with a Chinese businesswoman in central China who had founded the Fuyang AIDS Orphan Salvation Association (AOS). They were trying to help Ren Nan, a 12-year-old girl with untreated AIDS who was living alone with her 15-year-old sister. Both parents had died from AIDS, and the girls received little help from family. They were ostracized by other villagers. One day, the older sister left the village to find work. They approached me to help them connect to AIDS programs in China and to help obtain medicines for Ren Nan. This is how I got involved with AOS and started working on the AIDS orphan issue in China.

**N&V:** *What shape has that involvement taken?*

**J.K.:** Currently, I split my time between the Schneider Institutes at Heller and Harvard's Kennedy School, where I am the director of the AIDS public policy training program. We educate government officials in China and Vietnam about why they should care about AIDS and what they can do to stem the tide. I am also the team leader for China for the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative.

**N&V:** *Meanwhile, what can be done for the children orphaned by AIDS in China?*



**J.K.:** While AOS has done a lot to give financial, educational, and nutritional support to AIDS orphans in Fuyang County, it is abundantly clear that these children need psychosocial support. It's not enough just to keep children off the streets. AIDS orphans experience emotional and financial strain when a parent is sick, grief when the parent dies, and then stigma, potential exploitation, and isolation after the parent's death.

**N&V:** *What motivates you to stay involved?*

**J.K.:** Nothing else feels as urgent to me. If I can help the Chinese government understand what we have learned about AIDS in the last 25 years, I will have made some headway in fighting this terrible epidemic.

**N&V:** *Is Heller a good home for your work?*

**J.K.:** There is a real congruence between my goals and Heller's goals. Social and financial inequity drives many risk behaviors, such as drug abuse and prostitution. Poverty is itself a determinant of HIV vulnerability and contributes to worse HIV outcomes. Until you tackle that inequity, you can't solve the problem of AIDS. Nonetheless, there is a lot that can be done. Heller has that commitment to social justice, equality, and community participation. ■



Heller Alumni Association board members don hard hats to tour the Irving Schneider and Family Building.

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# Heller Alumni

News and Views

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**Stuart Altman**  
Dean

**Thomas P. Glynn, MSW'72, PhD'77**  
Chair, Heller Board of Overseers

**Gail Robinson, PhD'80**  
President, Heller Alumni  
Association Board

**Claudia J. Jacobs '70**  
Editor and Director of  
Development, Communications,  
and Alumni Relations

**Norma DeMattos**  
Editor and Assistant Director of  
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