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Development through research, advocacy, education, affiliation and action.

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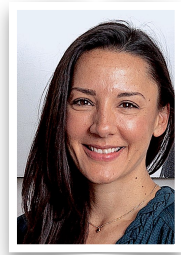
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President's Message

Greetings to our members and their families on behalf of the Board of the Illinois Society for Clinical Social Work! Despite the many curveballs 2021 threw our way, this year held many significant milestones for ISCSW, including our biennial Fall Conference on Ethics, Cultural Competence and Sexual Harassment to help us all meet our licensure requirements, the continued success of our virtual Jane Roiter Sunday Morning Seminar series, and the welcome addition of several new Board members!



Kristy Arditti

Our 2021 Seminar Series began in the spring, with Georgia Jones, LCSW, presenting in March on the importance of evolving along with our clients. In May, Lynn McIntyre, PhD, LCSW, presented on integrating social justice into our practice, followed by Terry Northcut, PhD, LCSW, leading a June Seminar on *Bridging Psychodynamic and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy*. In September, shortly after the publication of our previous newsletter, Tara Powell, PhD, LCSW, delivered a topical presentation on *Burnout and the Brain: Evidence-Based Strategies Heal the Tired Brain during Protracted Crises*, an especially relevant subject given the continuing long months of COVID uncertainty we have all been coping with.

The following month, we also offered three wonderful presenters for our *Fall Conference on Ethics, Cultural Competence, and (new in 2021) Sexual Harassment*. This was our first virtual Fall Conference, and the first to take place over two days—consecutive Fridays in October. On the first day, *Ethics and the Online World of Social Work* was hosted by James Marley, PhD, LCSW, an Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academics at Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work. Dr. Marley frequently presents at local, national, and international conferences on social work ethics, and has served as an expert witness in cases involving social work practice concerns, malpractice claims, and wrongful death allegations. He guided participants through the ethical dilemmas of e-mail, texting and social media contact with clients in the context of the recent abrupt expansion of

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President's Message (continued)

teletherapy. On that same day we heard from Linda Freedman, PhD, LCSW, who provided a one-hour session on *Meaningful Sexual Harassment Training* to deepen our sensitivity to these issues. Her workshop provided video examples that helped clinicians examine the different dynamics of sexual harassment in the workplace and how to respond to and report these experiences. Capping off the final day of the Conference, Ida Roldán, PhD, LCSW, former Academic Dean and current faculty member at The Institute for Clinical Social Work, provided an enriching workshop entitled: *Is it Possible to Achieve Cultural Competence in Our Clinical Work?* This workshop helped participants consider various cultural experiences of both patients and clinicians, and what meaning they bring to the clinical relationship.

I want to thank Michelle Greene, Kristy Bresnahan, and Adam Ornstein for working so very hard on our Fall Conference and the other presentations this year!

This year also brought a windfall of six new Board members into the ISCSW family to fill vital roles in our organization. In March, we were joined by Kevin Miller as chair of Legislation and Public Policy, Pam Katz as chair of Membership, Heather Watson as chair of New Professionals, and Ginny Nikiforos as chair of Public Relations and Marketing. We are also thrilled to introduce our new Secretary, Ebony Harris, who joined our board in October. Please look for information about Ebony in this newsletter (page 15). Finally, Joseph Kanengiser, who will serve as an at-large Board member, will officially join us in 2022! For all of our new and existing Board members, refer to ilclinicalsw.com/board-members for detailed biographical information. Hopefully, our new Board will be able to meet in-person soon.

In another exciting development, ISCSW is now on Facebook! We welcome you to join our group, where you can connect with us and your fellow colleagues, as well as make comments and share resources. The group can be found at: facebook.com/groups/479562163386829 (See page 5 for more information).

In addition to Facebook, you can stay up to date on our Board's activities by visiting our website: www.ilclinicalsw.com

Wishing you and your families a wonderful winter season. Stay safe and warm, and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Warmly,



Kristy Arditti
President, ISCSW

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Reflections

on Caring for Our Clients and Ourselves during the Pandemic

Nora Ishibashi, PhD, LCSW
 Psychotherapist in Private Practice

“If, then, I were asked for the most important advice I could give, that which I considered to be the most useful to the men of our century, I should simply say: in the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you.” —Leo Tolstoy

On February 25, 2020, I turned 70 years old. Seventy is a lot of years. I have lived through the development of the polio vaccine in the 1950's, the Korean war, the Cuban missile crisis, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy, and Malcolm X. I lived through the Vietnam war, the anti-war protests, Brown vs. Board of education, which desegregated the schools, and the civil rights protests. I lived through the Beatles and the Stonewall riots. Men walking on the moon and Woodstock. The war on poverty and the women's movement. Legalization of abortion and the oil crisis. Watergate and the internet.

Sixteen days after my last birthday, I walked out of my office, not knowing I would not return for 14 months. I cannot remember ever having been so frightened in my life. We were dealing with a virus that was brutal, novel, and incomprehensible. We didn't know how it worked or how it was spread, and we didn't know what to do about it. It was called unprecedented. The thing is, all those historical events I've lived through were unprecedented. But this time it was global, and thanks to improved technology, we could witness the pain and destruction all over the world as it was happening. It was an ongoing and very visceral trauma.

The uncertainty of existence is something we keep being surprised by, even though at some level, we know it is fundamental. We scramble for anchors, some measure of stability, something we can be sure of. For some people it is religion. For some people it is money or power. For some people it is leaders, gurus or authority figures. Uncertainty is nearly unbearable, and we bargain with life to gain some measure of predictability. We stockpile money or food; we have insurance, guarantees, and contracts. And still life throws us curve balls, and we keep thinking, “Wait. I did not see this coming.” Irrational though that is.

One of the profound benefits of aging is the perspective it gives us in understanding our experience, both within ourselves and in interaction with the outside world. We know we cannot control everything. We know we have to keep reconfiguring how we manage our lives to adapt to new circumstances. We know we are not ever going to get everything in our lives in order, once and for all. Like sharks that have to keep moving to survive, we have to keep learning, adapting and growing as everything around us shifts and changes. We don't know what we will be called upon to understand, respond to, or do in the world. All we know is that, so far, we have managed to keep going. So, fingers crossed, we'll figure the next thing out, too.

The net result is that we stopped, we noticed our lives, we allowed things to be as they are, even though we did not like it. Circumstances have forced us to truly inhabit the time and space we occupy without knowing what is next and without clinging to the past. A patient said to me, “I have not hurried in a year. I do not want to hurry anymore.” What a poignant statement for this moment.

We are recognizing starkly the ecstasy of the mundane. Things we took for granted feel like profound miracles. A cup of coffee with a friend. Groceries. Children. Going to school. Flat tires. Helping each other and getting help. Being able to see our people over Zoom or FaceTime. The miracles are endless. It's enchanting. And we come to a place of deep gratitude. We have lost so much. And we are still here. And we are still doing our best. And, in our work with our clients, we are still trying to make the world better, one person at a time.

Reflections

Ruth Sterlin, LCSW • Psychotherapist in Private Practice
ISCSW Board Member - Vice President; Newsletter

A testament to resilience. After the year and a half that we've all been through, my clients are now coming to my office for sessions, with the exception of a few who still don't feel safe meeting in person. So, are things getting back to normal, or are they just different? I'm not sure how to answer that, but what I do know is that there's been an incredible amount of change.

During this period, one young client had to undergo extensive testing for a possible life-threatening, degenerative disease. She did this with courage, and, fortunately, her diagnosis was negative. Another client in her early fifties went through an "in-home" separation from her husband. Eventually, she and her husband decided to work on things and stay married. The turbulence and unhappiness of this process, though, all took place while both of them were quarantined in the same house. While I don't want to diminish the hardships of my younger clients and how they've shown great courage, I can't help but think about the one thing they all have in common: time is on their side. Most of them can count on having many years of life ahead.

Not so, for my older clients – and I include myself in this group. They've been cheated of a year and a half of their lives. Yes, we've all had to isolate, forego seeing close family, distance from friends who need us and endure other crazy-making obstacles, but older clients have had to do all of this just when time is slipping through their fingers... just as their days on earth have become precious and fleeting. What I've seen, though, is a resilience that has astounded me.

One seventy-year-old client used our work during this time to overcome a very deep depression by expanding her family contacts online. While grieving over how angry and neglectful her adult son has been towards her – often withholding visits with her new grandchild – she began exploring her family genealogy and reaching out to cousins she never knew she had. In addition, she talked for the first time about a traumatic experience she had in her twenties at the hands of an old boyfriend. When quarantining began to loosen, she was invited to a small, outdoor gathering that she knew would include this old boyfriend. Instead of turning down the invitation, she made a decision to go to the party and confront him. I was surprised and delighted by her determination. At the party, she told him

face-to-face how angry she was and how badly hurt she'd been by his cruelty. In one night, forty-three years after the fact, she was able to put a very damaging experience to rest. Far from remaining stuck in her sadness and anger, especially over her son's destructive behavior, she made a leap forward in her life. I ask myself if I would've had the courage to do what she did.



Another set of clients, a couple approaching their eighties, were rejected by their adult daughter. In a conversation that took place shortly before the pandemic began, their daughter told them she didn't want to talk or have contact with them, refusing to discuss it further and not being at all clear about the reason for her rejection. This was both confusing and devastating for my clients. We sat together for months—much of the time on Zoom —and I watched them, their pain palpable even through the screen. At times, I wondered how they would survive this.

To add to their difficulties, the wife had just finished treatments for breast cancer and was struggling to regain her physical strength. Then, her husband developed an illness which threatened to be crippling. Fortunately, it passed, lightening their load, at least a little. What resulted was that, with all of these obstacles, they found the strength as a couple to create a pandemic "bubble" with the wife's siblings in another state. Restoring this connection with family gave my couple hope; and, over the course of the next year, the pandemic still going on, they decided to pack up their belongings and move across the country to be near this other part of the family. In order to continue our work together, I modified my licensing to be able to do teletherapy in their state; and at this point, we are working hard together online, processing the loss of closeness with their daughter and their adjustment to new surroundings at such a late stage in life. Amazingly, they are doing well.

This is really about moving forward. So many of my younger clients have shown wonderful courage in their ways of dealing with hardships during the past year and a half. What has been most unexpected for me, though, is the resilience I've witnessed in those who've reached their last chapter in life. These clients are constantly watching sick friends "drop like flies", wondering how many days they themselves have left on this earth. They see the panorama of their future reduced to a much smaller picture, and yet they keep forging ahead. Is it the wisdom of age that has allowed them to keep making progress? Is it the human instinct to survive by not giving up? Who even knows the answer to these questions?

Going through the pandemic has changed all of us. Although our struggles may be filled with more questions than answers, one thing I'm certain of is the awe-inspiring changes made by so many of my clients. Especially with my older clients, this period has made me cherish the opportunity – the gift, really – they've given me to be part of their lives, to help in the hard work they are doing, and to partake in their refusal to take the throes of life lying down even as the end of life is nearing. In truth, they were the ones I thought would be more likely to give up the fight. Instead, they turned around, grabbing life by the arm and deliberately marching it to a place of great strength. They've provided a wonderful model for me – for all of us – as I forge my own path through this last chapter of life. Who would've ever imagined how much we as therapists learn from those in our care!

Jenny Philipson, LCSW
Private Practitioner

With the ongoing pandemic, most of us have taken the opportunity to reflect on our lives and what or who is most meaningful to us. The year 2021 is also a very significant year for me in terms of anniversaries. My mother died 27 years ago, when I was 27 years old. I had her in my life for exactly half of it as of November 30, 2021. My father who lived much longer died 10 years ago, and I have been in solo private practice for 20 years. I am also turning 55 at the end of December. Definitely a time for reflection.

I am thinking about my life and what has given it the most meaning. Growing up, my parents were bigger than life. They were a beautiful, dynamic couple whose focus was bringing people together. They were brilliant and vivacious and creative. Both of them were writers. My father wrote fiction that delved into the psychology of his characters and their motivations. The human condition. My mother found people in her everyday life whose stories she learned by expressing interest in getting to know them. The themes that ran through her interviews were about individuals overcoming adversity. She was exquisitely sensitive and empathic. She engendered trust in her and made whomever she was with feel like they were the only person who mattered at that moment.

I longed to be like them. I dreamed of being a writer, but never really tried because their shoes seemed too big to fill. But what I am recently thinking about is how they both taught me how to be a good therapist. I didn't consciously choose this profession to cull the skills they possessed in understanding the complexities of humanity, or to think in terms of literary prowess, but this is exactly what happened. What I learned from growing up with such analytical thinkers and researchers into the minds and hearts of those who touched them, set me up for the most satisfying work I could imagine.

Psychotherapy brings together the inquiry and empathy of getting to know someone deeply, and the poetry of metaphor and emotion in the culmination of an art form. I am grateful. To have my health, the memories of my parents, and a career that keeps me forever connected to my past. I'm on the path I am meant to be, and it brings a sense of peace and fulfillment. I want that to be reflected in my work as a therapist.



Join us on Facebook!



We are pleased to announce our new official Facebook networking group!

While ISCSW is a professional society with numerous benefits to our membership, this free Facebook group is a resource for *all* clinical social workers and allied professionals in related fields, *regardless of ISCSW Membership status!* Current ISCSW members are highly encouraged (but not required) to join.

The group can be found and joined here:
facebook.com/groups/479562163386829

Our goal in offering the group is to foster a space for Illinois clinical social workers, students of social work, and students/professionals in related fields who are looking to connect with other social workers or adjacent professionals, grow our skill sets, and explore challenging clinical issues. We hope you will find it a useful resource for networking and professional solidarity.

We are dedicated to integrating clinical concerns with the advancement of social work's focus on social justice, person-in-environment, systems work, political action, and advocacy for social change. We invite you to join us in exploring how ISCSW can support macro social work practice and bring pro-social change to the world.

The group is intended for social work professionals and students and is not open to the general public. As such, it is structured as a *closed group* to ensure privacy and encourage a candid space for networking and clinical growth among social workers and other related professionals in Illinois. We do welcome you to join if you work in a related field and share social work values, even if your formal training is not in clinical social work directly.

Joining a closed group means that your name will be visible as a member, but the content of your contributions (comments and posts) will only be seen by fellow group members.

Feel free to share this resource with others who could benefit from joining—we would love to have them in our community! If you have any questions, please reach out on Facebook to one of the administrators of the group, or email us at:

iscswcontact@gmail.com

Original Clinical Article

Public School Closures, Structural Violence, and Genocide: *How Social Workers Can Partner with Communities to Resist Oppression and Preserve Human Rights*

by Kevin Miller, MA, PhD Candidate

Introduction

This is the story of my personal experience in the field as a social work M.S.W., Ph.D. student and Director of the Empowering Counseling Program (empowercounselprog.wixsite.com/ecp-luc), working as the facilitator of a human rights-based after-school program at Harper High School in the Englewood community in Chicago. It is also the story of my journey to the realization that I was witnessing genocide in the form of structural violence. This narrative is based on my ethnographic field notes and reflexive memos, across the span of about eighteen months while I was earning internship hours towards an M.S.W. degree. The stories within this autoethnography may sound unbelievable and even feel unreal to me. I suffer from secondary trauma as a result of my work, which can make it difficult to describe the countless human rights abuses that I have witnessed. While reading this narrative, you may find yourself experiencing disbelief that such abusive conditions could exist in the United States, but everything I describe here is a true account of my experiences and observations. I have thoroughly disguised all identifying information, in accordance with our Social Work Code of Ethics, but unfortunately, what I write here reflects the destructive force that structural violence has on human rights.

The story begins with finding myself amid a human rights crisis: Chicago's abrupt decision to simultaneously close over fifty public schools, including the high school where I worked. For me, this experience highlights the cruelty embedded within neoliberal social and educational policies in the United States. One of the purposes of writing this narrative is to provide social and cultural context to structurally violent policies, such as closing public schools and other forms of structural violence. Additional reasons for writing this are to show the inextricable political link between the individual and the structural, and to challenge social workers to become radical opponents of structural violence and its genocidal effects.

Before I proceed, I want to define what I mean by *structural violence*. Utilizing a structuralist viewpoint, where structure and institutions are central in analyses, individuals and communities are placed within the structures of society with the result that these structures often constrain individual and community agency (Ho 2007). Constraint manifests itself as inequality across domains such as education, political

and economic participation, and healthcare. Structural violence, as theorized by Galtung (1969), is indirect violence where there may not be an identifiable perpetrator of violence, because the violence is embedded in the structures of society and shows up as unequal power or life chances. It can be thought of as "structured suffering by historically given (and often economically driven) processes...." (Farmer 2004).

It can therefore be difficult to prove the existence of structural violence: How can there be violence without anyone specific committing unambiguous acts of physical violence? One reason is that interpersonal violence and structural violence are not mutually exclusive. That is, both forms of violence can exist together, and often do. For example, the high school where I worked, Harper High School, severely lacks resources. In fact, according to the 2018 Chicago city budget, more capital funds were spent on one "high-performing" high school than on all public elementary and high schools in the neighborhood surrounding Harper *combined!* With structural violence conceptualized as indirect, system-perpetrated violence that is meant to sustain inequality and constrain agency, it becomes clear that closing public schools is an example of structural violence.

Reflecting on my field experiences in a story that strives to adhere to the principles of autoethnography feels retraumatizing. Yet, it is important to me that I share my narrative in order to demonstrate both the brutality of structural violence—such as school closures—as well as the wealth of strengths youth possess to resist even the most severe human rights abuses. It is important to provide a corrective narrative about youth of color living in structurally marginalized communities, because so much of what is said about this youth is distorted.

This field experience also shaped me as a social worker, refining my commitment to anti-oppressive research and practice based on advancing the human rights of those who are often neglected, even by many in our own profession. Throughout the duration of this field experience, I was the only mental healthcare provider available to most students. The district social worker or psychologist at Harper would not log more than fifteen counseling minutes per month, and there were no outside social services that attempted to help students. Most days, I felt abandoned by my own profession. Think about it: there are three nationally ranked schools of social work within eight miles of the high school where I worked, and yet no social services were provided by these institutions. As I reflect on the genocidal conditions I witnessed, I will at the same time critically examine the social worker's role in responding to structural violence, as well as the great potential that our profession has to meaningfully address crises like these. Thus, this experience reinforces the notion that all social work is political, that the very issues we as social workers strive to address are directly influenced by policy at the local, state, federal, and global levels.

My Drive to Work

A snapshot of my daily commute from one side of Chicago to another side of the city helps paint a picture of structural violence. Each day while driving to and from Harper, I drove on an expressway along a body of water, passing through a northern and southern section of the city. As I drove, I usually sat quietly and reflected on my experiences in the field that day. In the neighborhoods closest to Harper, I'd pass one (corporate) grocery store, zero pharmacies, and dozens of police officers, many of whom drive undercover in unmarked cars. I often found myself waiting three full seconds before I'd accelerate at green lights because of how many police cars I have seen speed through red lights. Depending on the route I took, I also passed two empty buildings that used to be public schools. About seven minutes later during my drive, I merged onto an expressway near different neighborhoods. Segregation in the city is tangible. Here, I'd pass stadiums for professional sports teams, famous parks and tourist attractions, and beautiful trails where scores of runners, bikers, and tourists are often outside enjoying the warm summertime sun. Along the body of nearby water, there are yachts, skyscrapers, beaches, beautiful spaces dedicated to art and nature, luxury condominiums, and countless restaurants and bars.

Just the observable wealth difference I saw everyday driving home was staggering. This is an example of structural violence. The effects of this are as tangible as racial segregation in the area; residents living in one of the wealthiest neighborhoods live on average to be ninety years old, while residents living less than ten minutes away where Harper is located live on average to be sixty (Gourevitch *et al.* 2019). A thirty-year difference in life expectancy in the span of eight miles. Knowing this statistic, it is unsurprising that every day during the spring and summer, I saw yacht parties on the water where not forty minutes earlier, I'd seen people who I assumed were experiencing homelessness, sleeping on the steps of a church near Harper. I think many of us are desensitized to visualizations like this, as are most Americans. But as the richest nation in the world, we cannot accept this or be desensitized anymore! We must face that the United States is not a leader of human rights in the world; and, in fact, has perpetuated genocidal conditions on to people of color living in communities like the one I worked in, with the closure of all four public high schools in the neighborhood.

Interpersonal Violence as a Product of Structural Violence

In this autoethnography, I will also discuss forms of interpersonal violence that occurred between individuals, which convey that interpersonal violence could be regarded as a product of structural violence and which creates conditions that allow interpersonal violence to happen. I want to illustrate the complicated web that is the relationship between structural and interpersonal violence. With that said, structural violence can make even the most astute administrators

feel hopeless and desperate. I saw this firsthand at Harper, as described in a quote from my field notes a few years ago:

“Even though the principal gave us permission to use the room and help students, I am still having an extremely difficult time navigating the administrative aspect of my field placement. For example, the principal seems to have complete autonomy from the district. They have implemented very harsh, punitive measures for minor infractions. On top of that, they are unwilling to work with certain students, based on the students’ reputation, I think, even around [dealing with stressors] like having children or a death in the family. They are also using my program as a reward system for students. If a student they do not favor ‘acts up’ during school, [the principal] will ban them permanently from my program, but not tell me until I arrive that day. I still see these students for counseling, but they do not get paid if they get kicked out.”

I am not trying to excuse the abuse happening here or in later stories, but rather I want to highlight that this does not happen outside of the structure that allows it to occur. I have also seen security guards, hired as contractors, physically assault students. I first saw this one day when I walked up the stairs to the second floor of the school. I heard yelling as I walked up and felt my heart drop. As I continued up the stairs, I witnessed a security guard grab a student by the neck, lift him up with one hand and slam him against a locker. I was in absolute shock. It was over within seconds, as the guard dropped him and then walked down to the opposite end of the hallway, perhaps noticing that I was nearby. I walked further down to see that it was one of the youths in my program waiting for the door to be unlocked, presumably by the guard who choked him. After talking with the student, I quickly went to tell an administrator what I just witnessed. The administrator’s reaction and body language suggested to me that this was not abnormal. I did not see this security guard again after this incident.

Additionally, students have told me that when administrators at Harper hear about an impending fight through social media, or if students were fighting earlier during school, staff puts the students inside an empty classroom, locks the door, and lets them fight until the issue is over. Certainly, students should not be locked in a room to fight until a winner emerges, but after years and years of being beaten down by structurally violent policies, it is not hard to imagine the sense of desperation and defeat one might feel.

Again, these stories of interpersonal violence are shocking and inexcusable. Children should not have to endure the kind of abuse that Harper students had to face. But I do want to highlight the role of the district here. Students at Harper, including students in need of special education services, told me that across three years, a school psychologist appears to be absent, and a district social worker is on-site once a week, with very limited availability. This is the educational policy that the district thinks works for

Original Clinical Article (continued)

students living in a neighborhood with a poverty rate double the average of the city as a whole. I discussed this issue in another field note:

"I have also come to understand a psychologist has not been present in years and the social worker is actually a teacher and case manager. Every single student at the school would benefit from seeing a social worker, as this school has the highest homicide rate of any school in the district. Death and violence are so common, that every student I know (I know most students at the school) has had a family member or friend be a victim of murder. One of my other clients' fathers died last week and I am informally talking with two others about their parents being murdered within the last two weeks. We (our after-school program) actually are now Harper's primary mental health service provider, as we attained permission from the principal to use a classroom during the day. Specifically, between my fellow social work intern and I, we will have someone available for both scheduled and drop-in counseling services four days per week, from 8:00am-6:00pm. I am happy this worked out, because I am feeling that Harper is being abandoned in every other way."

"Our School is Closing"

The afternoon that I learned Harper was closing will stick with me forever. When I parked at Harper, I noticed that there were more cars around than usual. I felt an indescribable sense of anxiety as I walked towards the school. I was greeted as usual by one of the security guards named Shanice, who was less of a security guard and more of a caring staff member that treated students as if they were her own children. She has been in this role at Harper for over thirty years. Shanice does not have a college degree in social work, but she is a hero to this community. Before I made it through the metal detectors that day, she told me, "Our school is closing, the kids already know, too. The district wants to shut us down." My stomach dropped, worse than when I saw that security guard choke a student in the hallway. Again, I was speechless and froze. One student in my program was sitting on a folding table next to Shanice, wiping the tears from her eyes. I responded to Shanice, saying, "Why would they close Harper?" She said, "they have been trying to close us down for years, so here we go again."

Harper has been educating students for over one hundred years and has been institutionalized as a pillar of the community. Many students have told me that their parents and grandparents graduated from Harper and that they were proud to follow in their footsteps. Shanice was dedicated to the school, having worked there for over three decades. I always relied on her advice and expertise, especially on this day. She told me the students were terrified of what this news will mean for their futures. She said that they were asking her about where they will go to school when Harper is closed. Will they be able to afford public transportation to this new school? If not, will it be too far to walk to? Will it be safe to walk there? Will it be safe to take public transportation?

I made my way up the staircase to the classroom where my after-school program takes place, still having flashbacks of seeing that security guard pick up a student by their throat and slam them into a locker. The students were right behind me, but were silent, like they were mourning. We walked into the classroom and organized the chairs into a circle to begin the session. Our program utilizes a humanistic group therapy framework, and we start each session with check-in, where students discuss high and low points, feelings, memories, or thoughts they are having. This day was a little different, though. I was about to initiate the circle processes, when—and I remember distinctly—one student, Ayah, said, "They're not closing this school...we won't let them." Another student next to her began shaking their head and said, "They think we're *failing*," with a sarcastic emphasis on *failing*. I knew these students well, and they were anything but failing. I also thought it was interesting that students can simultaneously mourn the closure of their school and hate the fact that they experience so many human rights abuses within the same building. I think they separate the institution of Harper and its significance to the community from the several sequential principals and administrations. Even so, when this student said "*They think we're failing*," every other student scoffed and shook their head. I could tell they were tired of hearing this narrative. Other students began describing what this school meant to them. One student said, "This is where I eat...I eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner here. I am here at seven in the morning and leave at seven at night." Another said, "My mom and dad went here. All my friends go here. I work here, I learn here." After the session ended that day, I got in my car and immediately felt numb. I drove my normal route home past the yacht parties and luxurious condominiums in the wealthier communities nearby, feeling defeated.

The closures of public schools are state-sponsored actions in the guise of maximizing economic and educational productivity that perpetuate race and class-based disenfranchisement by committing structural violence and human rights violations against vulnerable groups. This structural violence is a form of genocide, as defined by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948). Public schools are the anchor of many communities. They are multi-purposed institutions that provide a variety of functions to communities, including educational services, social services, before- and after-school programming, multiple daily meals, mental health services, employment, community meeting space, social order, and space to participate in the cultural life of the community (Peshkin 1978). Closing schools fundamentally violates many human rights, associated with the above-mentioned functions, which students, families, and communities are entitled to. These human rights violations are a form of structural violence and are genocidal in their implications.

(cont. page 10)

Calling All Writers!



The Illinois Society for Clinical Social Work is looking for contributing writers! Regardless of your level of experience with writing, we believe that if you are a clinician in the field, you have something worthwhile to say... and our Newsletter is an excellent place to say it!

If writing a full Clinical Article is not your preference, we invite you to submit a review of a book or professional journal article, or to express your opinion on cultural competence issues.

We also plan to continue our **Reflections** column as a regular part of our ISCSW Newsletters, so members of our social work community can share thoughts about their work. These brief and informal essays can be related to the hardship of the pandemic, the transition back to in-person treatment, or any other issues relevant to our work. Many of our members have shared how much they appreciate hearing about colleagues' experiences. We welcome essays varying in length from two paragraphs to two pages. Short or long, we will always find them of interest.

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Original Clinical Article (continued)

Structural Violence and Genocide

In 1951, the *We Charge Genocide* petition posited that the United States is committing the crime of genocide against African Americans. The petition stated, “We maintain, therefore, that the oppressed Negro citizens of the United States, segregated, discriminated against and long the target of violence, suffer from genocide as the result of consistent, conscious, unified policies of every branch of government” (Patterson 1952). The petition argued that the foundation of this genocide is economic: “It is genocide for profit” (Patterson 1952). It states that the intricate structure of society’s institution enforces an oppression that guarantees profit. We can see the foundational argument of *We Charge Genocide* in the contemporary closing of schools. Specifically, Chicago Public Schools’ rationale for closing fifty-three schools in 2013 and all four high schools in Englewood, including Harper, is two-fold: low test scores and “underutilization.” The district closed underutilized schools to maximize economic investment in public education. Eighty-eight percent of the impacted students in 2013 were black and ninety-four percent were low-income (Pozen Center for Human Rights 2013). A clear pattern emerges between historical and on-going economic disinvestment in low-income neighborhoods of color, and the closing of “underutilized,” poorly performing schools in those same neighborhoods. This is the same concept of *genocide for profit*, as termed by the *We Charge Genocide* petition and exemplifies structural violence as outlined by Farmer (2004) and Galtung (1969).

Genocide comes in many forms. In 1948, the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defined genocide as, “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

As stated in the *We Charge Genocide* petition, genocide is often mistaken for the total destruction of a race of people. However, according to the United Nations Convention on Torture (1948), genocide is also any intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a group on the basis on nationality, race, ethnicity, or religion. It is no less genocidal, by definition, to cause serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group than it is to kill members of the group. The intention of a district when closing over fifty public

schools in black and brown neighborhoods is to practice efficient capitalism. However, it becomes clear that this capitalistic motivation is the driving force behind genocidal school closures, causing serious bodily and mental harm to students of color. Like colorblind racism, economic driven racism is still racism, even if it lacks the characteristics of overt racism, such as outward race-based physical violence. To illustrate my point, here are some case examples.

Marcus

The next day, after the school’s closing had been announced, I arrived at Harper about an hour early. It was cold and raining, which reflected my state of mind at the time. The school’s closure was weighing on my mind, and I felt defeated, but still ready to support the students in any way I could. At the start of our session, another student, Marcus, expressed his concern for the violence that was sure to follow the closure of Harper. Marcus was a very skilled basketball player and had hopes of getting a scholarship to play in college. When I first met him a year before, he refused to say more than a few sentences each day for several months. However, he was still present every day. He spoke more when it was just him and I talking, which is how I came to find out he had family members that were high-ranking in a gang and needed money earned from the gang to survive. It took a few months to find out he has had several family members, including multiple siblings, who’ve died from homicide. He stuck with our program and we stuck with him. He still calls me occasionally just to say thank you. On that day, he told me he feared being killed more than anything, that he only leaves his house to go to school and back because as he said, “Death is creeping closer and closer to me.” Regarding changing schools, he told everyone, “People are going to get killed. You can’t walk down [street name] if you’re from here. I don’t have money to get on the bus every day, so what are we supposed to do?” Again, this was heartbreaking to hear. I could not comprehend why children had to pay for public transportation to get to school or how the city could knowingly put children in a position to get murdered on the way to school. I knew it was not a coincidence that this school, along with the other nearby schools, had zero white students. This is what structural violence does.

Students whose schools were closed face an increased risk for violence. For example, the Midwest Coalition for Human Rights (2013) released a memo detailing how a string of school closings in a midwestern city compromised the human rights of children. Specifically, they write that children have the right to be free from violence and the right to life and that closing schools increases children’s risk of violent victimization, since many students will have to cross gang lines to get to their new schools. They also posit that their right to education will be eroded, as classrooms will be over-crowded and that students who

need the most support, such as disabled children, may be deprived of legally mandated services (Pozen Family Center for Human Rights 2013). In support, community members continually warned district officials that consolidating schools places children in danger. Specifically, gang lines are often difficult to circumvent and crossing lines, knowingly or unknowingly, increases risk for those students. The violence associated with some gangs can affect any student, whether or not the student is or desires to be affiliated with any gang. One activist said that consolidating schools is like “lighting a powder keg,” because young people can become gang-affiliated based on where they live, whether they want to be or not (Black 2018).

Derrick

It was a new week and I drove to Harper with renewed energy. I tried to rest and refocus in order to be the best social worker I could be. The impending disaster of closing this school was still in the back of my mind, but I kept thinking about the strength that Ayah had on the day she learned her school was set to close and how smart and determined she was. During our session this day, Ayah told me that the community around Harper is organizing to prevent the closure of their school. They began organizing almost instantly after the plan for closure was made public. She said most of the students and their families were involved and had plans to protest at the district office, the mayor’s residence, and within the school. I later found out the key organizers of this were Harper alumni whose children currently attend the school. Ayah was almost like a motivational speaker from a movie in this moment. A few students expressed apathy due to a sense of hopelessness, but Ayah stood up and made a speech that you would think was from an Oscar-winning movie. She told everyone that this is not just about closing this school. Rather, it was about preserving their lives. She said, “They are taking our school today, they took the hospital before, and it will be your lives next.” I saw the inspiration and hope grow on the students’ faces, and I am sure Ayah saw it grow on mine, too.

After the session, Shanice asked me to speak with a student named Derrick who was not enrolled in my program. Shanice told me that he got upset during class earlier because he was being bullied by his peers and used expletives in class when his peers would not stop. His teacher wanted him to be suspended. He had been sitting in the office for hours after the incident, waiting for someone to decide on what to do. I asked Shanice if Derrick and I could speak alone, so we started walking down the hall to talk. He said that he was diagnosed with autism when he was much younger and transferred to Harper last year from a high school in a different district. I asked him if he was receiving any special education services or accommodations at Harper, and he simply said no. This was not shocking to me, as another student recently told me that she had to retake geometry, even after passing the class before, because Harper

did not have enough teachers to offer other classes. Derrick began crying. He told me that he hated his new school Harper, because it was so different from his old school. An excerpt from my field notes from this day state that:

“This week, one of my clients at Harper told me he felt neglected by the school because he is persistently cold, thirsty, and hungry because most of the water fountains do not work, nor does the furnace, and that they do not offer extra food at lunch. He said Harper does not offer the same services that his previous high school did, like special education classes, anger management assistance, and access to a social worker or psychologist. My eyes began to tear after hearing this. I was in shock, once again. Derrick went on to say he used to enjoy reading books, but it is not safe to travel to the public library and that the library at Harper has a lock and chain on the door at all times. I asked him why they would not be allowed in the library and he said because the roof caved in and he was told it is not safe to be in there. To my knowledge, the roof was never fixed.”

Within the next few weeks, this story took a turn. Ayah and the other organizers took action. Shortly after she made her speech during the program, Ayah and another student from my program, Ciara, led a student sit-in where all students left their classroom during the day to sit in the hall, protesting the closure. A few months prior to this, Ciara had slammed another student into the ground during our program after an argument. Violence was not characteristic of Ciara, so this shocked everyone. She informed Shanice and I that she was profusely sorry and was going through significant traumas, including the sense of loss and fear she was experiencing regarding her school’s closure. Ciara was holding a megaphone, leading her peers in a chant. Ayah was at the opposite end of the hallway, aiding Ciara’s efforts. Photos of this protest were picked up by media, which sparked the movement to keep the school open. Shortly after Ayah and Ciara led the sit-in, a group of parents and students marched on the mayor’s house. They protested the decision to close Harper on the sidewalk in front of the mayor’s multi-million-dollar house, which stood in a neighborhood where children can walk to one of the top-ranking high schools in the nation. Families in the neighborhood were interested in improving their school and solving some of the challenges within Harper rather than closing it.

A week later, students and their families organized and held a sit-in at the district’s headquarters before the end of winter break. This was heavily covered by media, and I felt hopeful about the amount of political pressure being applied. I was eager to go back to the school and resume our after-school program. I arrived a few hours early on that Monday morning just because I wanted to see the students. I walked into the building and was happily greeted by Shanice. I wondered if she was ever able to leave this building, as there was never a day where I was in the building, and she was not. I realized I was learning from Shanice that this work is less a job than it is a lifestyle. I walked up to the classroom and encountered the principal, who told me the school received funds from the district to employ all students in a manda-

Original Clinical Article (continued)

tory after-school job. I was thrilled to hear all students would have access to a paying job, but also wondered how this would impact attendance in the after-school program. I walked into my classroom and waited around thirty minutes before any of my students arrived. Ayah, Reggie, Marcus, and Ciara walked in and said they were given permission by the principal to be exempt from the new job at the school, because they wanted to be in my program instead. They told me that my after-school program was the only place they could be themselves and speak openly without fear. They insisted that they will be making less money by staying in my program instead of working at the school's new job, but they did not care. I also asked what the other job was, and they told me all the students are being paid to empty out every room in the building to prepare for its permanent closure.

Four days had passed and each day, more and more students left the school's new job and came back to my after-school program until we reached our capacity of 20 students. These students had such a strong connection to the program that they quit a higher paying job to come back. Reggie also approached me on this day, telling me that he was removed from the other job for the same reason he was removed from my program. It seemed to me that he was being targeted by the administration. There were over one hundred paying positions within this school between my program and the principal's new job, and I believe he was the only student banned from both. He was supposed to leave the building each day after-school but would sneak upstairs when he could to be a part of our group. I was frustrated that this was happening to Reggie, but I was energized by the enthusiasm the students had for the program and by the fact that we could still see him for individual counseling.

"We Won... for Now"

A few more weeks had passed. We kept the after-school program going and students were still reeling from the idea of having to attend a different school in the fall. But one Thursday was different. I walked in through the doors at Harper and saw Ayah sitting on a table, talking with a few of her peers. She had the widest, proudest smile on her face and told me, "We won." I said, "What did we win?" She told me that the district had reversed their decision to close Harper. At first, I thought she was joking, but I saw her smile get somehow bigger, and I knew at that moment it was real.

Shanice walked toward us and asked me if I'd heard the news. Ayah abruptly said, "I told him already that we won...for now." I asked her what she meant, and Shanice said the district has delayed the closure for a few years until all the current students graduate. Ayah told Shanice and I that the students will not give up, and they plan to keep the school

open permanently. Every day during our after-school sessions, the discussions revolved around the closure of Harper and about human rights. We studied various United Nations human rights charters and declarations, and then discussed how they applied to the present situation. This narrative demonstrates the power of youth standing up for their human rights while simultaneously illustrating the deeply ingrained structural racism and violence within the US, which I argue is genocidal.

Human Rights and School Closures

My experiences that I describe here not only reinforce the notion that social work is political, but also that mental health care, clean water, and access to school libraries are also political. Human rights are a political matter and so is simply being alive. Structural violence is a human rights issue and is related to genocide. The issues I describe here are bigger than you and me, and bigger than social work. Like Shanice, addressing this genocide requires that we all make it a part of our lifestyle, not just a job that we clock out of every night. Human rights can be a useful tool in this fight. There are many human rights conventions and bodies that are designed to protect the rights being violated by the mass closure of public schools. For example, in 1948, the United States led the successful campaign for United Nations approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This was the first time in history that an international organization had agreed on a statement on human rights, which was intended to be legally binding on endorsing nations (Samnoy 1998). It outlined human rights that everyone is entitled to, such as the right to equality, life, education, and freedom from torture and discrimination (UDHR 1948). However, the lack of an enforcement tool and vagueness of the document has manifested into the difficulty to legally hold nations accountable using the UDHR (Samnoy 1998).

The United States has ratified additional international human rights documents that should provide protection against the genocidal act of mass school closures and social death, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965). The United States has also signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The United Nations and these human rights documents are intended to protect children and communities from the structural violence that mass school closings inflicts.

In 2013, a human rights groups wrote a "letter of allegation" to the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights in Geneva to implore the United Nations to investigate whether the wave of 2013 school closings violated the human rights of children (Midwest Coalition for Human Rights 2013). The letter argues that these school closings violate children's rights to equality, non-discrimination, lives free from violence,

and education. While the United Nations does not have power to issue orders in the United States, they can conduct investigations and release reports; however, no official investigations have been prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner.

Perhaps if mobilization around the mass school closings were framed around the basis of structural violence and genocide, as described in this paper, there might have been more traction in the effort to illustrate how devastating school closings are for communities. Human Rights groups from many cities have filed letters of concern to the United Nations due to school closings; however, none have called it *genocide*. When school closings concentrated in black and brown communities are considered nationally, as opposed to regionally, it becomes clear that this violence is structural and genocidal (Ahmed 2007). It is important to connect school closings across the United States and the world to unite causes because only then will the full effect of this genocide be clear.

The Role of Social Work

Human rights values are embodied in the social work profession. The International Federation of Social Workers (2012) writes, “The social work profession, through historical and empirical evidence, is convinced that the achievement of human rights for all people is a fundamental prerequisite for a caring world and the survival of the human race.” Social workers and social work students are therefore key human rights advocates and activists. Ife (2001) goes so far as to say, “...the key to understanding our role as social workers in a globalized world lies in the promotion of ideas of global citizenship, expressed through an articulation of human rights” (p. 10).

One of the problems in our social work profession is that the conditions of truly deep poverty are so horrifying that people react by distancing themselves. Many social workers graduate and do not want to work with those being severely and structurally oppressed, as described in my narrative. Faculty members in schools of social work need to do a better job of teaching students the effects of structural violence and the human rights abuses described here, along with the implications of doing nothing about it. As I am writing this paper, I still feel puzzled about how schools of social work across the nation are failing to take the issue of structural violence and racism seriously. I am wondering, how was I—still a student of social work or a “person that does social work”—the only social worker present across five years at Harper? How could it be that a genocide was and still is occurring in communities within ten minutes of three top-ranked schools of social work? While not one of us alone can fix these issues within our profession, we need to collectively centralize efforts at re-strategizing our profession around addressing human rights abuses, as described in my narrative. We can learn and teach this notion of social work. It is now our responsibility to do so.

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Kevin M. Miller is a Ph.D. candidate at Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work and Director of the Empowering Counseling Program (ECP). His research focuses on child development and what youth find meaningful in after-school program contexts. As Director of the ECP, Kevin facilitates the Law Under Curious Minds after-school program, in which youth and staff partner to investigate, research, and report on human rights abuses to build communities' capacities for resisting injustices.

Book Reviews

by Bill Kinnaird

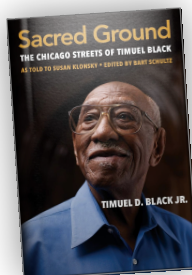
Sacred Ground: The Chicago Streets of Timuel Black
by Timuel D. Black, Jr.; as told to Susan Klonsky (2019),
Edited by Bart Schultz - 170 pages

Timuel D. Black, Jr., is a Chicago icon and legend of the local African American community. An educator, writer, and civil rights activist, he died on October 13, 2021—at age 102. Timuel came to Chicago in 1919 with his family in the first wave of the historic African American Great Migration north, from the Jim Crow South. However, the Black family's version is that when Timuel was just 8 months old, he raised up, looked around at the oppression in Birmingham, Alabama, where he was born and said, “*Shit, I’m leaving here.*” His mother then said to his father Dixon, “Dixie, that boy can’t even change his diapers. We’d better go with him” (p.2).

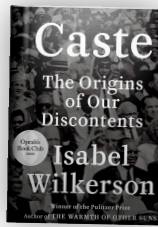
Sacred Ground: The Chicago Streets of Timuel Black is an oral history and primary source material of the author’s experiences as an African American Chicagoan. This “memoir is [his] own personal story” as he told it at age 99 to Ms. Susan Klonsky. Mr. Black has long extolled the value of oral history recording as demonstrated in his previously authored *Bridges to Memory* about the Chicago African American experience.

While Mr. Black considered his story “to be typical of men or women of [his] generation” (p. 7), he is anything but “typical.” The title of the book—*Sacred Ground*—attests to a deeply-felt, purposeful, and productive life that in the end he cherished. The ground he refers to, of course, is Bronzeville, the vibrant South Side milieu where he grew up with the cast of people who supported and encouraged him. It was a formative experience when, as a soldier in World War II, he witnessed the Nazi death camps. He vowed to himself then to fight for civil rights. For an older, local reader, the names and events that Mr. Black recounts will be familiar. This story is an oral history of the Chicago African American community from the 1920’s to present times.

This reviewer first encountered Timuel Black thirty years ago when he spoke to a criminal justice class at the University of Illinois Circle Campus. It was apparent that he was the pre-eminent historian of the African American community. Years later, when Mr. Black spoke about African Americans in Chicago to a packed house at the Harold Washington Library, he shuffled onto the stage and casually waved; the applause was overwhelming. This is a very worthwhile book.



Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent
by Isabel Wilkerson (2020) - 453 pages



Already reviewed by many, recognized with the Pulitzer Prize, and recommended by presenters at ISCSW events, this review is for those who may not have yet read Wilkerson’s acclaimed *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*. Wilkerson’s thesis is that the social construct of race is an aspect of caste. Those relegated to the lowest caste have gravely suffered and continue to. Furthermore, our caste structure has been, and continues to be, severely detrimental to society.

Wilkerson clarifies the concept of *caste*. She employs a range of metaphors to challenge the reader to look at what we most commonly refer to as *racism* in a new and different way. She reframes the issue of *race* as more accurately an issue of *social caste* with race in the United States being the visible agent of the unseen force of caste. She defines the dynamics of social caste structure as a “stubbornly fixed ranking system of human value” (p. 24), and considers what that means in terms of power, resources, opportunities, and behavior of a dominant group to a subservient group or caste. She notes that caste is not a term often applied to a group of people in the United States.

Beginning with Dr. Martin Luther King’s insight during a visit to India in 1957, when he was introduced to a group of Indian high school students as “an American of the un-touchable caste of Black Americans”, Wilkerson traces the history of prominent social caste systems in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. These are and have been found in India, Nazi Germany, and the United States. Additionally, Wilkerson discusses what social-cultural conditions are necessary to undergird social castes, identifying eight “pillars of caste.” In sum, these conditions chronicle how our society has gotten to where we are today. It is a searing account of slavery, and its long aftermath.

Wilkerson also discusses the deep and wider-ranging effects the caste structure has on American society, where we see the persistent ripples across medical care, the media, and the economy. She describes how people maintain unconscious racial bias, “the blindsiding banality of caste” (p. 212), and cites research suggesting that “about 70% to 80% of whites fall into this category” (p. 187). She recounts so many examples of how “every day across America, whenever two or more are gathered, caste can infect the most ordinary of interchanges, catching us off guard...” (p. 212). She also suggests how the caste structure exacts an enormous toll from American society as it drains energy and suppresses peoples’ talents and potential. From Reconstruction to today, from Obama through Trump, Wilkerson describes emerging challenges to—for and against—the caste structure. Finally, she tells her hope for the future and humanity’s future.

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents is provocative and challenges the reader to think about race and the structure of American society in a different way. It is highly recommended.

Meet Our Board

Ebony Harris, LCSW

Ebony Harris is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and the new Secretary for the ISCSW Board. Upon completing her Bachelors in Administration of Justice at Howard University, Ebony went on to complete her MSW at Loyola University Chicago. Both during and after completion of her MSW, Ebony worked with a variety of populations including refugees, chronically homeless youth and adults, justice-involved individuals, and youth in schools.

Ebony currently works as a Clinical Therapist at a group practice where her interest areas are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) clients and those who have experienced trauma. In her work with clients, she strives to utilize a strengths-based and multicultural lens in order to promote safety and understanding. Ebony is trained in EMDR and is interested in continuing to grow her skills and experience with a variety of trauma issues.



Welcome, Ebony!

Open Board Positions

This is a time of exciting transition for ISCSW. We are currently working on several new projects, and to that end, we are looking to add new board members who are interested in and excited about the mission and goals of our Society.

The Illinois Society for Clinical Social Work is a professional organization that advocates for the needs of social workers in direct practice settings and acts as a resource by promoting the professional development of our members through political action, advocacy, education and affiliation.

In the past, the ISCSW played a major role in the passage of the legislation that provides licensure for Clinical Social Workers in Illinois. Our organization also helped pass important amendments to mental health care laws, including third-party reimbursement, changes in the Juvenile Court Act, the Crime Victim’s Compensation Act, the Mental Health and Disabilities Act, the Unified Code of Corrections, and the Adoption Act.

Participation on the board requires a social work background and academic degree, monthly attendance at our board meetings (see below) and the willingness to spend an additional 1-3 hours per month on work for our board. Benefits include networking opportunities, promotion of your own work/practice, board experience for your CV, and free attendance at our educational events.

If you would like to be a part of steering and shaping the organization through this new era of leadership and development, we are looking for new board members to fill the following positions, spanning a variety of interests and skill sets:

Student Liaison (to be filled by a social work student)

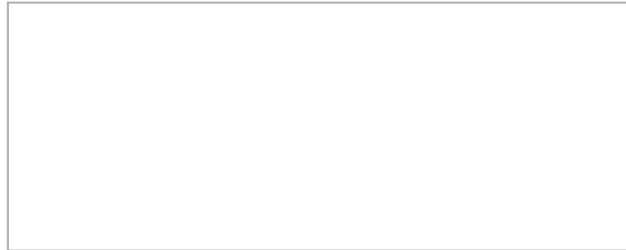
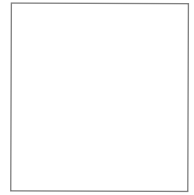
Cultural Competency

Newsletter Editor

Education

Ordinarily, the board meets on the third Tuesday of every month in the Lakeview neighborhood of Chicago (located convenient to the Belmont Red/Brown/Purple lines), from 7:30 to 9PM. During the COVID-19 outbreak, we have been conducting our meetings safely online via remote video conferencing. Either way, our meetings are both fun and productive. If you are interested in gaining board experience or have questions, please contact Kristy Arditti, ISCSW President, at **(773) 677-2180** or **kristyarditti@gmail.com**

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Board Members

A number of additional Board positions are currently vacant and open for application! See page 15 for details.

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