

FALL 2021

action

The Magazine of the Mandel School



Shaping agents of change



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

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On the Cover: Kwame "Eddie" Botchway, David L. Hussey, PhD and Cheyenne DeShields

Photo by Roger Mastroianni.

From the Interim Dean



To Mandel School Alumni and Friends:

After such an extraordinary year and a half, I am very happy to welcome you to a new semester as the Mandel School's interim dean.

Our longtime dean, Grover "Cleve" Gilmore, retired on June 30—he was integral to numerous university successes, and his visionary leadership propelled our school forward. During Cleve's tenure, I served as associate dean for academic affairs and student services and chaired the Master of Science in Social Administration (now Master of Social Work) program for 14 years. David Miller is now serving in that role.

I am also excited to introduce you to our next dean, Dexter Voisin, who will begin Jan. 1. Voisin is dean of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto. He was elected to the Board of Directors for the Society for Social Work and Research last year and selected to be a Fellow of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare. In 2019, he published *America the Beautiful and Violent: Black Youth and Neighborhood Trauma in Chicago*, which blended insightful narratives from some of the city's most challenged neighborhoods with trenchant analyses of the policies and practices that helped create them. Dean Voisin will be an excellent addition to our university.

Should you have any questions during the fall semester, please don't hesitate to reach out. I look forward to connecting with you.

In good health,

Sharon E. Milligan
Interim Dean
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel
School of Applied Social Sciences

A changing landscape of leadership

New interim and permanent deans launch the next phase of the Mandel School

When Dean **Grover “Cleve” Gilmore, PhD**, retired June 30, he brought to a close two decades of leadership of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences—and began the next phase for the top-ranked social work school.

Sharon E. Milligan, PhD, the school’s longtime associate dean for academic affairs and student services, an associate professor of social work, and chair of the Master of Social Work program, began serving as interim dean on July 1. And in mid-July, Case Western Reserve announced that University of Toronto’s **Dexter R. Voisin, PhD**, will begin his role as the school’s permanent dean Jan. 1.

“I am exceptionally honored by this opportunity to work alongside the students, staff, faculty, alumni and supporters of one of the premier social work schools in the country,” Voisin said at the time of his announcement. “I am deeply grateful to Dean Gilmore for the two decades of tremendous leadership that have made the Mandel School such a positive force for the campus, the people of greater Cleveland and the profession.”

Serving as dean of Toronto’s Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work since 2019, Voisin significantly grew the school’s international enrollment, research and fundraising—while also increasing the diversity of the school’s faculty and postdoctoral fellow population by 44%. Voisin co-chaired the university’s Anti-Black Racism Task Force and served on several institution-wide committees at the 90,000-student university, including one on student mental health. He was elected to the Board of Directors



Photo by Steve Zorc

Sharon E. Milligan, PhD

for the Society for Social Work and Research and selected as a fellow of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

“Dexter’s success in Canada, coupled with the sophistication and empathy demonstrated in his research, indicated that he is the right person to lead our social work school in this moment,” said Case Western Reserve Provost and Executive Vice President Ben Vinson III.

Prior to joining the University of Toronto, Voisin spent two decades at the University of Chicago. He has authored or co-authored more than 155 articles in peer-reviewed journals and secured more than \$11 million in external research support. In 2019, he published *America the Beautiful and Violent: Black Youth and Neighborhood Trauma in Chicago*, which blended insightful narratives from some of the city’s most challenged neighborhoods with trenchant analyses of the policies and practices that helped create them.

“Dexter Voisin will bring a unique combination of excellence in leadership, scholarship and public



Dexter R. Voisin, PhD

engagement to the Mandel School,” Case Western Reserve President Eric W. Kaler said. “More, his deep commitment to interdisciplinary efforts holds great potential to benefit the broader campus.”

University leadership also expressed exceptional gratitude for Interim Dean Milligan’s service during the transition. A member of Case Western Reserve’s faculty since 1982, Milligan has taught graduate courses in community development, social welfare policy and research methodology. Her research interests include urban poverty, the evaluation of neighborhood change initiatives, and systems change research. She has directed several funded research projects focusing on health and minorities, including a study that uncovers technology for evaluating conditions and assets in low-income communities.

“Dr. Milligan possesses a wealth of experience and knowledge,” Vinson said, “and I am confident that her expertise and years of service to the Mandel School will serve us well during this important time of transition.”

Honors & Appointments

Recognizing some of the achievements of Mandel School faculty and staff in 2020–21.

Kathleen Farkas, PhD (WRC '73; GRS '84, social welfare), associate professor, and **Richard Romaniuk (SAS '99), PhD**, senior lecturer,

were invited to speak at the first International Scientific–Practical Conference this past May in Ukraine. They spoke about approaches to trauma-informed care and trauma interventions via Zoom to an international audience of social work researchers and practitioners.



Farkas

Photo by Steve Zorc



Romaniuk

Photo by Steve Zorc

Kimberly McFarlin (SAS '05, MNO '05)

was appointed the school's assistant dean of student services and career planning. She previously served as a field advisor and the school's director of international affairs, and will continue to work closely with international students to facilitate their transition and success.



McFarlin

Photo by Maria Sharron

David B. Miller, PhD, associate professor and director of international education programs, was appointed associate dean for academic affairs and chair of the MSW program. Miller has a long history of



Miller

Photo by Steve Zorc

leadership in the school, university and community: He recently served as the chair of the university's Faculty Senate, chaired the Mandel School's Steering Committee for three years, and was president of the South Euclid City Council for six years.

Lori Longs Painter (SAS '87), clinical instructor and field advisor, is now director of the Intensive Weekend (IW)

program, succeeding Gerald A. Strom, PhD. Painter has a long association with the program, having served as the principal field advisor for 13 cohorts of IW students since 2009.



Painter

Photo by Steve Zorc

Nancy Rolock, PhD, the Henry L. Zucker Associate Professor in Social Work Practice and associate dean for research and training, presented in July at the virtual International Conference on Adoption Research, hosted by the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Italy. She also presented at the ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences' virtual European Scientific Association on Residential & Family Care for Children and Adolescents conference in September in Switzerland.



Rolock

Photo by Dan Milner

Faculty promotions

Concluding a one-year process of evaluation, the Case Western Reserve University Board of Trustees approved the following faculty promotions in July. To be given an emeritus title after retirement a person must have served the university for a number of years and made a noteworthy contribution that merits a lifetime appointment.

Mark Chupp, PhD (GRS '03, social welfare)
Associate Professor

Grover C. Gilmore, PhD
Professor Emeritus
Department of Psychological Sciences

Mark L. Joseph, PhD
Professor

G. Regina Nixon
Instructor Emerita

Gerald A. Strom, PhD
Senior Instructor Emeritus

Dennis Young, PhD
Professor Emeritus

Our school, by the numbers

University honors Mandel School researchers with leadership awards

Case Western Reserve University recognized 10 researchers from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences as part of its Think Big Leadership Awards, an effort to recognize the individuals and teams who are helping the university fulfill its strategic plan.

Winners—selected from more than 100 individual and team nominations—were honored at an event this fall at Harcourt House hosted with President Eric W. Kaler and Provost Ben Vinson III.

Achieving Social Impact in Mixed Income Communities: Team Award

Alexandra Curley, PhD; Dawn Ellis; Taryn Gress (SAS '11); Mark L. Joseph, PhD; Amy T. Khare, PhD; Sherise McKinney (SAS '17); Richard Rodems, PhD; Diane Shoemaker; and Debbie Wilber

The National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities team forges meaningful partnerships and deploys impactful research far beyond campus. The initiative is engaged in community partnerships across the City of Cleveland, across the country and in Canada. Locally, in the Buckeye-Woodhill neighborhood, the initiative partnered with numerous community partners—including residents—to lead the application process for \$35 million in funding (see p. 8). In the Slavic Village neighborhood, the team is galvanizing a partnership to design and implement a pioneering community-network building strategy with a racial equity focus.

Organizing and Educating

Adrienne M. Fletcher, PhD (SAS '05)

Adrienne Fletcher is the assistant dean of diversity and inclusion and a member of the Minority Affairs Faculty Senate Committee. She has organized university-wide events regarding diversity and discrimination, regularly makes major contributions to the minority affairs committee and researches implicit bias. She is known as being approachable and willing to help make meaningful change. Fletcher educates others on the impact of microaggressions and overt discrimination and finds ways to reduce it on campus and in the community.

The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences is a leader in social work and nonprofit management research and education.

Take a look at the Mandel School's latest facts and figures.

AT A GLANCE

#9 school of social work in the country, according to *U.S. News & World Report* (#1 in Ohio)

9 multidisciplinary research and training centers, including **3** Centers of Excellence, covering a range of specialties

6 dual degrees, an option pursued by **19%** of on-campus master's students

8:1 student-faculty ratio, one of the nation's lowest

15 average class size, not including field courses

10 endowed professorships, among the most of any school of social work in the nation

CURRICULUM AND FIELDWORK

Our students are currently in placements in:

367 sites

207 of which are in Ohio

84 of which are in Cleveland or East Cleveland

126,855

hours of social work provided annually by MSW students at **367** field placement sites—an economic value of

\$6.2 million

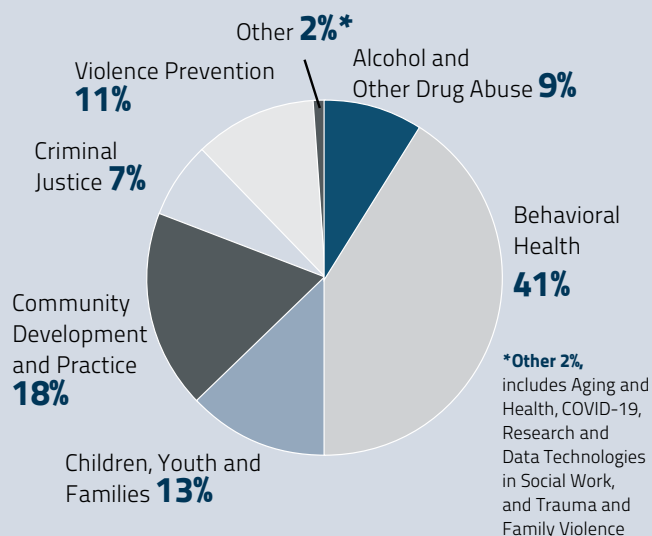
28 short-term, faculty-led study abroad courses at Case Western Reserve; **8** courses are offered by the Mandel School to nearly every continent

13% student participation in a study abroad course

100% on-campus students who received scholarship support last year

RESEARCH AND TRAINING

% of Research and Training Awards by Study Area



In FY 2021, the research and training community brought in close to **\$15 million** in grant funding, up from \$12 million last year.

- The primary research funders are **federal grants (70%)**, followed by **nonprofit (15%)** and **non-federal government funding (14%)**.
- Training is supported largely by **non-federal government grants (55%)**, followed by **nonprofit (32%)**, **federal government (7%)**, **business (4%)**, and **internal CWRU grants (2%)**.

STUDENT SUCCESS

521 students enrolled (fall 2021)

- **491** master's students
- **30** PhD students

31% underrepresented minority students in the student body

93.5% of recent grads employed or pursuing further education full time within six months of commencement

8,900+ alumni in all **50** states and **41** countries

National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities plays key role in drawing \$35M grant to Cleveland

Cleveland is one of five communities in the U.S. to receive a combined \$160 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to redevelop severely distressed housing and spur comprehensive revitalization under the federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI).

More specifically, the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) and City of Cleveland were awarded a \$35 million CNI grant for the Buckeye-Woodhill neighborhood—a roughly 1-square-mile area just south of Case Western Reserve University.



Debbie Wilber

Debbie Wilber, assistant director and research associate of the National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities (NIMC), and colleagues played a critical role in helping to secure such an important investment. Wilber “quarterbacked” the HUD application process, and the NIMC team coordinated with multiple stakeholders to ensure that a comprehensive and collaborative application, responsive to community needs, was submitted to HUD.

“It’s such a critical investment for the Buckeye-Woodhill neighborhood, which has been disinvested in for decades,” Wilber said.

Through the CNI grant, Buckeye-Woodhill, CMHA, the city and its partners will create:

- 638 new, mixed-income rental units (plus 162 vouchers for units in other developments in the region);
- A new health clinic;
- An early childhood education center; and
- Retail space on a commercial corridor.

The grant also will allow for owner-occupied housing to be rehabilitated and vacant lots to be infilled. Residents will be connected to employment, health, early learning and education opportunities.

“Housing matters. But more than that, community matters,” Wilber said of the importance of this project. “At NIMC, we talk about the importance of social dynamics in a community, the need to shape inclusive, equitable neighborhoods where differences are affirmed and valued. Unfortunately, this rarely happens organically. I love thinking about and influencing how communities are designed, who designs them and how we can ensure that they are places where everyone can thrive.”

New \$1.9 million grant launches multidisciplinary behavioral health education, training program

The Bureau of Health Workforce at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has funded a new Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training program

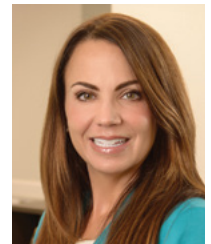


Photo by Steve Zorc

Amy E. Korsch-Williams

at Case Western Reserve University. A multidisciplinary team of researchers led by Principal Investigator **Amy E. Korsch-Williams (SAS '04, CNM '11)**, senior instructor in the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences' Center on Trauma and Adversity, received a \$1.9 million award over four years to provide specialized training experiences for social work, psychiatric nursing and doctoral psychology students.

A focus of the program will be training students in trauma-informed, evidence-based practices to expand and improve behavioral health services for racial, ethnic and sexual and gender minority youth. Participating students receive HRSA funded stipends while completing training experiences.

Korsch-Williams is joined on this initiative by a team of co-investigators: **David L. Hussey, PhD (SAS '79; GRS '92, social welfare)**, a Mandel School associate professor and research director at the school's Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education; **Britt Nielsen, PsyD**, a psychologist at MetroHealth Medical Center and associate professor of psychiatry at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine; and **Susan Painter, DNP**, an instructor at CWRU's Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing.



Examining the 'service cliff' for youth with autism and their family caregivers

During the next 10 years, an estimated half-million individuals in the U.S. with autism spectrum disorder are expected to transition from adolescence to adulthood, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

That means thousands of young adults will likely fall into a widening and potentially devastating gap in a variety of services—because they're too old for high school, but may not qualify for Medicaid-funded services, researchers from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences predict.

The findings of the 174-family study of individuals (ages 16 to 30) with autism, published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, show that having a Medicaid waiver and high school enrollment emerged as "the most robust and consistent" predictors of youth with autism and their families using available services, such as job training and access to care.

"These findings provide a snapshot of the 'service cliff' faced by families and highlight the need for additional research," said **Karen Ishler, PhD (GRS '13, social welfare)**, senior research associate and the study's lead author. "It reaffirms that once individuals leave high school, they are less likely to receive services. But having a Medicaid waiver provides a gateway to receiving all sorts of services."

David Biegel, PhD, the Henry L. Zucker Professor Emeritus of Social Work Practice and a co-author of the study, noted that how states administer Medicaid waivers varies widely, and that addressing the issue will require finding other options for funding services, changing eligibility requirements for Medicaid waivers and reducing the wait list.



Karen Ishler, PhD



David Biegel, PhD

COVID-19 drastically affects enrollment at child care centers

Because of COVID-19, the number of children age 5 and younger enrolled in child care in Cuyahoga County decreased 43%, while provider capacity fell



Meghan Salas Atwell, PhD

29% between September 2019 and September 2020—a pandemic-induced under-enrollment trend that could threaten the survival of local child-care providers.

Researchers at the Jack, Joseph and Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences' Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, partnering with Starting Point, a local child-care nonprofit, published their findings online with an interactive story map to provide a detailed geographical analysis of changes in the supply and demand of child care over that one-year period.

Meghan Salas Atwell, PhD, senior research associate, associate director of the Poverty Center and co-author of the study, said the most concerning finding is the decline in child enrollment relative to capacity over time, as well as the differential impact the pandemic is having on women and communities of color.

"The health and sustainability of the child-care delivery system is critical to ensuring that children and working parents are supported," Atwell said. "Our sustained focus is needed on these observed trends as the pandemic continues to evolve and challenge our community."

Shaping agents *of* change

How the Leadership Fellows program is transforming the future of social work

BY CAREY SKINNER MOSS



Kwame "Eddie" Botchway, David L. Hussey, PhD, and Cheyenne DeShields



For the past eight years, **Paula Atwood (SAS '73)** has mentored students at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences in the Leadership Fellows program—a two-year experience through which a small cohort of Master of Social Work students earn full-tuition scholarships and participate in specialized seminars, mentorship and a capstone project while earning their master's degrees. Atwood has worked with various universities and colleges over the course of her career in administration, management and direct practice social work, but she said the Mandel School is unique in how it continues to evolve.

"I enjoy having the tough conversations about life—about what it takes to work with and on behalf of others, about navigating the ills of the world..."

— Paula Atwood

"[The Mandel School] has kept up with the times," said Atwood. "It is committed to making a difference in the world—not just here in Cleveland, Ohio—and to paving the way for leaders of today, and of the future, to significantly make a difference in people's lives."

At 71 years old, Atwood is partially retired, and she stays connected to the field of social work through mentorship opportunities like the Leadership Fellows, through which she's now paired with her sixth mentee since 2013.

"It just keeps getting better," said Atwood. "I enjoy having the tough conversations about life—about what it takes to work with and on behalf of others, about navigating the ills of the world, and then trying to draw conclusions about what can be influenced and what is out of our hands."

Those difficult conversations are critical to helping graduate students find their area of interest in the field of social work—but they are just one part of the experience. The Leadership Fellows program began as the Louis Stokes Fellowship in Community Development—named in honor of the Cleveland civil rights pioneer and former congressman Louis Stokes—and was active from 2001 to 2007. It was reestablished and redesigned in 2012 by **David Biegel, PhD**, the Henry L. Zucker Professor

Emeritus of Social Work Practice, and continues today thanks to generous grant support from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, the endowed Louis Stokes Fellowship in Community and Social Development fund and contributions to the Mandel School annual fund.

In recent years, Leadership Fellows **Director David L. Hussey, PhD (SAS '79, GRS '92, social welfare)**, has built the seven-student-per-year program on a foundation of evidence-based practice and leadership.

Hussey, an associate professor at the Mandel School and the associate director of research at the school's Begun Center for Violence Prevention

Research and Education, arranges two seminars per semester, bringing in speakers to answer questions about what it means to be a social worker in the real world and give glimpses into their post-graduation career options.

Mentors take this a step further by helping students explore what opportunities the future may hold, and the fellows round out their experience with capstone projects in their final year.

"A number of the proposals center around practice innovations to create better interventions that meet the more specific needs of a vulnerable population," Hussey said of the varied capstone experiences.

These three program-specific elements, combined with the full scholarship, make Leadership Fellows one of the nation's premier social work leadership training programs, and help recruit top-tier candidates to the school who may not have otherwise considered moving to Cleveland, Hussey said.

"Scholarship support makes a significant difference in students' lives," he explained. "It also affords [the Mandel School] an opportunity to develop and cultivate true leaders in our field."



Kwame "Eddie" Botchway

Kwame "Eddie" Botchway

As an international student, **Kwame Botchway (SAS '19)** could not access student loans for graduate school in the U.S.—and he had his sights set on attending the Mandel School. Being accepted into the Leadership Fellows program enabled him to make the move from Ghana to Cleveland and begin his social work career.

The full scholarship was meaningful to Botchway—and now he's paying it forward in the Cleveland community.

For his capstone project, Botchway worked with Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) to design a program that would elevate the work of women and minority contractors while helping Black and Brown families build wealth through homeownership.

Village Capital Corp., a subsidiary of CNP, officially adopted the project—titled *Contractors on the Rise*—and brought Botchway on as community capital and impact manager post-graduation. Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic slowed the initial rollout of the program, but in its first two years, *Contractors on the Rise* has renovated and sold 12 homes in the Greater Cleveland area, with more in progress.

With additional funding on the way, Botchway is taking the opportunity to redesign the growing program using the trauma-informed approach he learned at the Mandel School. "You need to be cognizant [of the fact that] you're working in communities that have a history of trauma, of being redlined," he said. He's integrating feedback from contractors and taking a fresh look at how *Contractors on the Rise* works in historically disinvested neighborhoods.



Cheyenne DeShields

Cheyenne DeShields

Cheyenne DeShields (SAS '21) was inspired to pursue a career in social work after seeing the impact of stress and trauma on the elementary school children she taught and tutored. "It's hard for kids to focus on something like math," said DeShields, "if they aren't eating at night, if their parents are arguing or if they live in a shelter."

In addition to a fulfilling relationship with her mentor **Sharyse Jones (SAS '08)**, DeShields said the seminars were a highlight of the Leadership Fellows program. "I thought social work was just therapy," she said. "But the seminars really opened my eyes to everything you can do with this degree."

In the few months since graduation, DeShields has grown her original capstone presentation into a full-scale research project in collaboration with the Veterans Administration Health Care System in Palo Alto, California.

Her project studies the impact of COVID-19 on occupational health providers—doctors and other practitioners who work exclusively with hospital employees. DeShields and her colleagues interviewed providers around the country, asking how the pandemic has affected their patients, and helping to find solutions and resources moving forward.

The team hopes to publish a paper with their findings in the coming weeks. In the meantime, DeShields has made her way back to the Case Western Reserve campus—this time as a staff member, working in University Health & Counseling Services.

Photo by Dale Dong



Lexy Lattimore

Lexy Lattimore

Lexy Lattimore (SAS '21) first moved to Cleveland to work with a contemporary dance company. When she began dating Kwame Botchway during his final year of the Leadership Fellows program, Lattimore found she loved hearing about what Botchway was studying, often perusing his course reading materials. It sparked a passion in her and, with Botchway's encouragement, she applied to the Mandel School.

"My motivations were initially more professional, but the ways in which I've been transformed as an individual are really remarkable," she said. "The social work degree has sculpted me into a better human being. ... I wasn't anticipating that."

Lattimore said navigating "big life questions" became easier—and more powerful—with the help of her mentor, Paula Atwood.

"Social work is so personal," she continued. "In order to do this work in the way it deserves, you have to be right with you."

Through her capstone project, Lattimore designed a program she hopes to develop into a full-scale program post-graduation. Titled "Choreographing Space for Justice: A Healing-Centered Model for Women-Led Change," the program uses movement, storytelling and other healing practices to address environmental traumas, and to support Black women and girls as they start to redesign their neighborhoods in ways that work for them.



Amy Vaughters

Photo courtesy of Amy Vaughters

Amy Vaughters

Amy Vaughters (SAS '20) spent four years in the Peace Corps after college, serving in Bali, China and Ethiopia. She learned about the Mandel School through its partnership with the Coverdell Fellowship, a financial assistance program for Peace Corps volunteers pursuing graduate studies.

"Social work wasn't even on my radar, but in reading about the Mandel School, I realized [the field] aligned with my interests," said Vaughters, "I applied [to the program] and was connected with Dr. Hussey—and the rest is history."

Vaughters enjoyed how the seminars kept students plugged into the community, and her capstone project allowed her to put into practice all she had learned during her time at the Mandel School. But she said the primary benefit of the program was having Hussey as an advisor and mentor—crediting him and the school for her career success thus far.

She was recently accepted into the U.S. Army's highly competitive Social Work Internship Program for military-specific social work training.

Because of her experience and professional degrees, Vaughters will begin at the rank of First Lieutenant and, after some "army 101" courses in early 2022, start her internship at Fort Drum, New York. Vaughters said she is excited to dive deep into the culture of the army so she can help soldiers and their families navigate the unique mental health issues that come with military service.

Leaving a lasting legacy



Students call the recently renovated Harris Library a “critical part” of the Mandel School experience. Today, major contributors to the library have shifted their focus to support students through scholarships. | *All photos taken prior to COVID-19 masking and physical distancing requirements.*

Five years ago, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences marked its centennial by unveiling an overhaul to its main building. Central to the updates: the welcoming, airy Noble Commons named in recognition of a gift from the Donald and Alice Noble Foundation, and the bright and peaceful Lillian and Milford Harris Library, created in 1989 through a gift by **Lillian Harris (FSM '30, SAS '33)** and moved and redesigned thanks to a gift from her son and daughter-in-law, Seth and Lilli Harris.

These families' gifts transformed the look of the school, and now, they—and many others—are helping shape the futures of its students. Whether through the annual fund or a planned bequest, a personal commitment or a foundation gift, donors are stepping up to support scholarships—a key priority of the Mandel School and Case Western Reserve—and make a lasting impact on students' lives.

Alumni and families give back to the Mandel School in gratitude for educational opportunities

BY CAREY SKINNER MOSS

And beyond being an invaluable asset for research, the Harris Library also provides an opportunity for respite and connection.

“The Harris Library and its incredible librarians have been a critical part of my experience,” said PhD student Anna Bender.

Building the future

When Lillian Harris died in 2013, Seth and Lilli Harris honored her memory with a \$500,000 gift to relocate and redesign the Harris Library, which boasts one of the premier social work collections in the nation. The renovated library has proven a critical asset to students' success.

“The Harris Library has served as a major foundation, resource and touchpoint to me during my time at the Mandel School,” said PhD candidate **Tyrone Hamler**, who said he's written “countless” papers and articles there. “It is an essential part of the school.”



Seth and Lilli Harris

“Over the years, we’ve watched the Mandel School become one of the best in the country. And that’s part of the excitement of staying involved with Case Western Reserve.”

— Seth Harris

“It is a place that is beloved by the Mandel School community, and one that enriches the social environment, learning and research here.”

Similarly, Noble Commons—the vast open area upon entry to the Mandel School building—has had a transformative effect on the building and its community.

“The Noble Commons is a wonderful and welcoming space that intersects beautifully with the overall architecture and design of the school,” said **David L. Hussey, PhD (SAS ’79; GRS ’92, social welfare)**, associate professor at the Mandel School, director of the Leadership Fellows program and associate director of research at the Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education.

“It not only provides a convenient place for students to interact, but it serves as the largest gathering space for our Mandel community,” Hussey continued, “allowing the opportunity for us to come together to celebrate some of our most memorable occasions.”

But years after these gifts, both the Harrises and Nobles decided to help students—and the Mandel School community—even more.

Upholding a family tradition

Seth and Lilli Harris have an unusual legacy with Case Western Reserve University: Though neither are alumni themselves, the fondness and respect Seth’s parents had for CWRU has made supporting the school a family tradition.

It was rare for women to pursue graduate school in the 1930s, but Seth’s mother, alumna Lillian Harris, made a habit of defying expectations. In addition to running Cleveland’s social service program during the Great Depression, she remained CEO of one the family businesses—Pinxav (pronounced pink salve), a diaper rash formula developed by her husband, **Milford (PHA ’29)** until the age of 97, when she passed the torch to her granddaughters. Seth took over the other family business, Harris Wholesale Inc.—a wholesale pharmaceutical distribution company—from his father’s passing in 1972 until 1989 when he and his mother decided to sell the company.

Lillian and Milford deeply valued their education and, after her husband’s passing, Lillian gave back to the Mandel School in significant ways. In addition to the library, she established in 1997 the Lillian F. Harris Professorship, which is held by



The welcoming Noble Commons transformed the Mandel School—and now, the family after whom it is named is seeking to transform students' lives.

Claudia Coulton, PhD (GRS '78, social welfare), as well as the Harris Endowment Fund for student scholarships.

Now, Seth and Lilli are continuing that support of scholarships, by donating to the Dean Gilmore Scholarship Fund to commemorate the retirement of their close friend and former Mandel School Dean Grover "Cleve" Gilmore, PhD. "We wanted to honor both of my parents with this gift," said Seth, "as a tribute to their beliefs in higher education."

Building a foundation

Similarly, it's the impact of a Case Western Reserve education that spurred **Gayle (SAS '88) and David Noble's** commitment to the Mandel School through the Donald and Alice Noble Foundation, the charitable foundation named in honor of David's parents that the couple has run since 2002. The foundation grew with each parent's passing, and the couple has used those assets to give back to the community.

Gayle Noble enrolled in the Mandel School through a partnership with the College of Wooster. "SASS, as we called it in those days, was enormously helpful in charting my path to behavioral health," she said of her time in the CWRU social work program.

Her field placement during graduate school turned into a full-time job, and she spent the next 32 years working directly with individuals and families, mostly in private practice. Noble is now retired, but remains active by volunteering and working with the Noble Foundation, through which she and David recently established an endowed scholarship fund as part of Dean Gilmore's retirement campaign.

"I feel hugely fortunate to have experienced the SASS program, for the education I received and the field work that catapulted me into the professional work I did for decades," said Gayle. "I feel enormous gratitude, so I'm trying to express that with my support."

Planning ahead

Both Noble, who served on the Dean's Recognition Committee, and Seth and Lilli Harris, the latter of whom is on the school's visiting committee, also give back to the university through volunteer work. "Engaging with Case Western Reserve allows us the opportunity to continue a relationship with a community that was good to Seth's parents," Lilli said.

"Over the years, we've watched the Mandel School become one of the best in the country," said Seth. "And that's part of the excitement of staying involved with Case Western Reserve."

It's a connection another alumna made upon retiring from a meaningful career in social work, and became very involved with the university through committees and events almost 35 years after graduation.

So when it was time to make estate plans, the Mandel School was top of mind.

"After making plans for my family, I had some money left over," said the alumna, who wishes to remain anonymous. "I reflected on the big influences in my life, like my education at Case Western Reserve, and it all just kind of clicked."



Gayle Noble

She worked in collaboration with the Mandel School and Office of Strategic Giving to choose an option that worked best for her—a trust that will fund student scholarships after she passes away. A few years after her initial commitment, the donor was able to double the scholarship fund, thanks to a few smart investments.

“I want students to get the most possible out of their education,” said the alumna, who has witnessed many students struggle to balance full-time jobs with field placements and coursework.

Juggling work and study is a familiar challenge for **Jane Ann Robertson (SAS '95)**, and it’s one of the reasons she chose to include the Mandel School in her estate plans—the result of a seed that was planted decades ago when she first began at Case Western Reserve.

Following her undergraduate studies at the University of Akron, Robertson began her 33-year social work career at Lorain County Children Services. After rising in the ranks

for 10 years, the agency fully funded Robertson’s graduate degree at the Mandel School, and she completed the program on the weekends while working full time. Robertson said the lessons she learned influenced her long and fulfilling career, so when it came time to retire, she decided to pay it forward and establish a scholarship fund at the Mandel School through a bequest.

“It’s powerful to think about all the students in school right now, and everything they’ll be able to do in the future, the lives they’ll touch,” said Robertson. “I want others who share my passion to have the same experience I did—to be able to go to one of the best schools in the country and get top-tier training without a financial burden.”

It’s that commitment to creating possibilities for students that drives so many donors, of all sizes and forms of gifts.

“I like to cast a stone and see the ripple effects,” Gayle Noble said of the importance of giving back. “I want to leave a quiet legacy of change.”

GET STRATEGIC

Strategic giving provides the opportunity to make a commitment that best fits you and your family—now and in the future.

In fact, if you are 70½ years old or older, you may be eligible to receive tax benefits while supporting the Mandel School. By using the IRA Charitable Rollover (also called a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD), you can give up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA or Roth IRA directly to Case Western Reserve University—without paying income tax on your donation.

By using this simple but effective method of giving, you get to see your gift at work during your lifetime.

Your thoughtful philanthropy can make a meaningful difference in the lives of CWRU’s students and faculty.

Another popular planned giving option is to designate the Mandel School as a primary or percentage beneficiary of your retirement plan.

To learn how your support can benefit the Mandel School and to take advantage of tax benefits expiring Dec. 31, visit plannedgiving.case.edu or call the Office of Strategic Giving at 216.368.4460.



The John Yankey experience

The beloved professor and Mandel School supporter retired after nearly half a century—and now is honored nationally as a social work ‘pioneer’



One simple-but-strong thread bound together the nearly half-century of student assessments on courses taught by the legendary professor **John A. Yankey, PhD**: It was an experience.

Across 46 uninterrupted years before his retirement in 2019, students regularly noted it was nearly impossible to just show up for a John Yankey Class—to simply check in or check out. That’s because Yankey, the Leonard W. Mayo Professor Emeritus at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, taught classes that were both compelling and complex—just like the professor himself.

Yankey’s impact has spanned decades—and earned him selection in 2021 as a National Association of Social Workers Pioneer, an honor he received virtually in early

October. And even in retirement, his commitment to the Mandel School remains steadfast: He recently completed his work as co-chair of the Think Scholarships, Imagine the Future campaign, which raised more than \$2 million in scholarship funding for Mandel School students.

Since 1973, the soft-spoken man who nearly became a country preacher deftly took students into the worlds of nonprofit agencies, politics and mergers, where they learned by doing, no matter the course.

Joel Fox (SAS ’80) was a student in one of Yankey’s courses in 1978—just a few years into the professor’s teaching career. Fox served as chief development officer of the Menorah Park Foundation until his retirement in July; in 2016, Fox was named to the Mandel School Hall of Achievement.

BY MIKE SCOTT



“It may sound cliché, but I’ve always believed that ‘They don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.’”

“I remember being in awe of the humble ‘West Virginia preacher’ who focused me on my path and helped me fall in love with what would become my life’s work,” Fox wrote in a letter to Case Western Reserve University President Emerita Barbara R. Snyder before Yankey’s retirement. “Our university, our town and our world have been enriched beyond measure by this extraordinary teacher.”

Fox returned to Yankey’s final course at the Mandel School in the spring of 2019, auditing the class nearly 40 years after his first one. He and a dozen other students (including the author of this article) worked for two intensive weekends to broker various hypothetical mergers, make decisions about merging or cutting staff, and find a way to better serve the needs of all parties involved.

The ‘mind and the heart’

Frank Whitfield (MGT ‘19) and **Nic Shefrin (MNO ‘20)** also were enrolled in that Yankey finale, and each responded to different aspects of his way of teaching—what the professor simply references as “the mind and the heart.”

“I can attest to the lessons learned and skills built in Yankey’s strategic partnership class were ‘next-day’ applicable to the field,” said Whitfield, who is now the mayor of Elyria, Ohio. “The simulations, the mock organizations, the mandatory teamwork—all were real-life situations. Dr. Yankey’s creativity brought out the best of us.”

Shefrin, founder of Fostering Hope, a nonprofit organization for children living in foster care, said: “Dr. Yankey put his heart not only into teaching, but into his students too.”

She recalled that when Yankey would dismiss class each semester, he would stand at the back of the classroom and say he’d be there to wish you well, shake your hand or give you a hug.

“And there was always a line of students waiting to get a Dr. Yankey hug,” she said.

One of those students in the last class of the last course was unquestionably the professor’s favorite: After 28 years of marriage, John Yankey’s wife, Sylvia, finally sat in on a course.

Sylvia Yankey, also a nonprofit consultant, fit right in as the students worked through the challenges of smoothly merging two nonprofits.

She reflected on the work ethic of the man she only referred to as “the professor” during the course of the five full days the teams worked together.

“John would spend hours preparing for class and was often up at 5:30 a.m., reviewing his notes and what he wanted to accomplish that day with the students,” she said. “He poured his energy into those class hours and would come home exhausted. He made teaching look so easy!”

His connection to people—combined with his scholarship and leadership in areas such as strategic planning, fundraising, nonprofit mergers and consolidations, and management training—has made Yankey renowned in the field of social work and nonprofit management. Plus, it’s made him a standout in the school, where all three annual outstanding teaching awards are named in his honor.

“You have to teach to both the head and the heart. Long after much of the content is forgotten, people remember how they felt in a course,” Yankey said of his immersive, experiential approach to teaching. “It may sound cliché, but I’ve always believed that ‘They don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.’”

Congratulations, Class of 2021!

In late May, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences celebrated the graduation of its Master of Science in Social Administration and Master of Nonprofit Organizations students.

But for the first time in decades, Case Western Reserve University held its commencement ceremonies outdoors—with graduates' seats physically distanced on Freiburger Field, masks worn except when accepting diplomas, and many family members and loved ones watching from home via livestream.

Former Dean **Grover "Cleve" Gilmore, PhD**, presided over his 20th and final commencement ceremony, while **U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown** presented the Mandel School's commencement address. Brown, chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee and member of the finance, agriculture and Veterans Affairs committees, is a lifelong Ohioan whose legislative actions are committed to the "Dignity of Work"—the concept, he said, that hard work pays off for everyone.

The university's convocation address was presented virtually, with pre-recorded remarks from convocation speaker **Marc H. Morial**, National Urban League president and CEO, and Alumni Association President **Aishwarya Arjunan (CWR '10)**, and the presentation of honorary degrees and official degree conferrals by **Interim President Scott Cowen** and deans.

"There's no time that I'm happier as dean as when I congratulate our graduates," Gilmore said, "and there's no class of whom I am prouder than the Class of 2021."





Honoring our students and faculty

The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences recognizes its outstanding faculty members and students with a variety of annual awards.

IRENE SOGG (SAS '40) GROSS AWARD
Alexandria "Lexy" Lattimore

SYLVIA AND JOHN A. YANKEY COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
Alexandria "Lexy" Lattimore

NORMA C. AND ALBERT I. GELLER STUDENT AWARD
Aaron Sharpley & Alyssa Wren

AROL SCHACK DISSERTATION AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SOCIAL WELFARE DOCTORAL STUDENT
Weidi Qin

DEAN'S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
Ivan Conard and Tiffany Mims

OUTSTANDING FIELD INSTRUCTOR AWARD
Melinda Waggoner (SAS '08)

JOHN A. YANKEY OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARDS

JOHN A. YANKEY OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD FOR ADJUNCT TEACHING
Meagan Ray-Novak

JOHN A. YANKEY OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD FOR FULL-TIME TEACHING
Adrienne Fletcher, PhD (SAS '05)

JOHN A. YANKEY OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD FOR THE MNO PROGRAM
Megan Granson, PhD

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD
Susan Sternad-Basel (SAS '81)

GRACE LONGWELL COYLE AWARD
Geneva Johnson (SAS '57)

HERMAN D. STEIN DISTINGUISHED SOCIAL WORK EDUCATOR
David Biegel, PhD

ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AWARD
Sherrod Brown, U.S. Senator for Ohio

CWRU GRADUATE AWARDS
DIEKHOFF AWARD NOMINATION
Dana Prince, PhD

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION RESEARCH AWARD
Tyrone Hamler

GRADUATE STUDENT APPRECIATION AWARD
Rong Bai (SAS, MNO '16)

GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS
Tyrone Hamler & Hyunjune Lee

MARIE HAUG AWARD
Devon Jones

Meet the Mandel School's Development and Alumni Relations Team



To our alumni, friends and supporters,
With the fall issue of *Action* magazine, I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself and the Mandel School's institutional advancement team to you.

As an alumna of Case Western Reserve University, I'm proud to work for the Mandel School. I joined the school in 2019, after nearly two decades as a partner and COO in a family business, and the last 20 years as a nonprofit professional at major organizations such as University Hospitals and the Cleveland Foundation.

Here you'll learn more about the rest of our team. We welcome your suggestions, questions and perceptions as we work to help make your experience with the Mandel School as meaningful and enjoyable as possible.

Thank you for your transformational support and for all that you do for the Mandel School!

Anne Marie Kollander (WRC '84)
Associate Dean of Development and External Relations
amk119@case.edu | 216.368.2311



Nada G. DiFranco (MNO '08)
Senior Director, Alumni & Donor Relations
ngd2@case.edu | 216.368.2281

Nada has worked for Case Western Reserve University for 20 years—12 years at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing and eight years at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, where she feels rewarded to collaborate with and assist so many amazing alumni and donors.



Melissa Elick
Development Manager
mxe234@case.edu | 216.368.0113

Melissa joined the Mandel School development team in February 2020, and she manages the day-to-day fundraising operations, providing support to her team and the Mandel School community.

Class Notes

Reported to the Mandel School from March 1 through Aug. 31, 2021.

Joel Fox (SAS '80)

retired at the end of July from his longtime position as chief development officer of the Menorah Park Foundation. Fox has served the local Jewish community for over four decades, spearheading numerous fundraising initiatives and expanding the corresponding resources and opportunities for many community-based organizations in turn.



Deanna Clingerman (SAS '98)

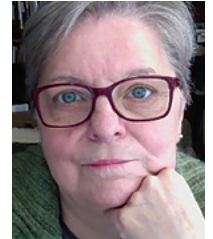
is the first location manager and funeral director of Cleveland Jewish Funerals. The funeral home, which serves the northeast Ohio Jewish community, opened its new offices in May and offers traditional Jewish service elements.



and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.

Barbara Pierce, PhD (GRS '12, social welfare)

is serving as interim associate dean for academic affairs at Indiana University School of Social Work.



Cathy Pennington (SAS '91)

was elected president of the National Leased Housing Association (NLHA), ensuring sufficient funding for assisted rental housing programs. Pennington is also the senior vice president and general manager of Phipps Housing Services Inc., a not-for-profit developer, owner and manager of affordable housing in New York City.



Michael Doud (SAS '99)

is executive director of the Mental Health, Addiction and Recovery Services Board of Lorain County, Ohio.



Katrice Williams (SAS, MNO '16)

is senior criminal justice fellow at the Cleveland Foundation. Prior, she was a policy associate at the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio. While attending the Mandel School, she was program manager for the Provost Scholars Program.



Minya (Smith) Nance (SAS '06)

is one of two new appointees to the Evanston (Illinois) Community Foundation's board of directors. As part of the 21-member board, she helps provide governance over strategic planning, policy and responsible stewardship of \$30 million in foundation assets. She is also managing director of integrated student services and assistant dean at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.



Leon A. Harris III, PhD (GRS '18, social welfare)

assistant director of health & human services for Cuyahoga County, spoke at the Central Neighborhood Surge Town Hall, engaging and interacting with Ward 5 residents to hear first-hand perspectives on the needs and concerns of their Cleveland neighborhood.



Wendy Breen (SAS '95)

was appointed Marion County program coordinator for the Alzheimer's Association Central Ohio Chapter, connecting county residents with needed care and support services. She facilitates community education programs, support groups, volunteer management and partnerships. Breen has worked for the Alzheimer's Association since November 2018, after first being introduced to the organization as a volunteer through its support groups—one of which she led herself.

Annette Iwamoto (SAS '12)

is the first executive director of One South Euclid (OSE), the community development corporation for the city just outside Cleveland. Iwamoto heads OSE's residential and commercial development initiatives, including South Euclid's first business incubator. Iwamoto is the immediate past president of the Alumni Association Board of the Jack, Joseph



In Memoriam

Death notices reported to the Mandel School from March 1 through Aug. 31.

Mary R. Moore

(SAS '44), 100, of Lexington, Kentucky, died April 3. Throughout her career, she worked for Child Protective Services in Cleveland and as a social worker for the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Kentucky.



Harold Agrast

(SAS '51), 97, of Lyndhurst, Ohio, died May 6.



Anne McKinne "Kiki" (Heitkamp) Eglinton

(SAS '53), 93, died Aug. 13 in Bloomfield, Connecticut.

Throughout her long and active career, Eglinton held a variety of professional and volunteer roles in Connecticut and, later, New York, where she was the executive director of the 7,000-member New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and then executive director of Family Service of Westchester, New York, from which she retired in 1993. She was active at the local, state, and national levels of the family service movement.



Anita Rotman (SAS '49)

95, of Maplewood, New Jersey, died Jan. 23. After graduation, Rotman organized anti-nuclear demonstrations and was a working mother. She was blacklisted during the McCarthy era and prevented from moving to the U.S. until 1968. She later completed a PhD in Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh and went on to become a professor and dean of students at Yeshiva University in New York.

Orietta Kohn

(SAS '50), 99, of Edwardsville, Illinois, died April 10. After World War II, she worked for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, an organization that helped survivors of concentration camps find welcoming places. The committee's director nominated Kohn for a fellowship to study in the U.S., which brought her to Cleveland to earn her MSSA. After raising a family, she returned to social work in a variety of part-time roles that served inner-city, disabled or elderly populations.



Harold Kuperberg

(SAS '53), 91, of Baltimore, Maryland, died May 5, 2020. He was a social worker for the Jewish Community Center and enjoyed working for various Jewish organizations.



Seymour Slavin, PhD (SAS '58), 99, died June 27 in Louisville, Kentucky.

After graduating as president of his School of Applied Social Sciences class, Slavin was a special assistant to Cleveland's first Black mayor, Carl Stokes, and served as director of the Mayor's Council on

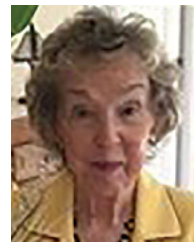


Youth Opportunity. More recently, he was a professor at the University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work.

Ann Winningham Logsdon

(SAS '61), 87, of West Palm Beach, Florida, died May 4.

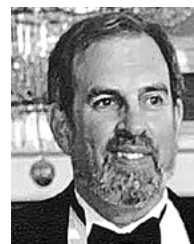
She spent a total of 42 years working in a variety of settings in social work, helping place children in foster homes in North Carolina, Massachusetts and Florida. She was the director of social work for Franklin General Medical Center, a community hospital in Valley Stream, New York, for nearly 25 years before retiring in 1997.



Stephen M. Rose

(SAS '63), 81, of Falmouth, Maine, died March 2. He was a professor at the School of Social Welfare at SUNY Stony Brook,

then director of the School of Social Work and a tenured full professor at the University of New England in Biddeford, Maine. He was a founding director of the University of New England-Spurwink Research Center, also in Biddeford. He received three Fulbright grants and was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, Finland.



Jane Smith (SAS '63), 83, of Livonia, Michigan, died July 16, 2020.

Laura L. Laser

(SAS '64), 86, of Ashland, Ohio, died May 9. She was a social worker and supervisor at Lorain County Children Services from 1964 until retiring in 1988.



Frank Anthony Heinz (SAS '65), 89, of Rockledge, Florida, died Oct. 3, 2020. Heinz worked as the executive director of Catholic Social Services in Rockledge, Florida, for more than 28 years; earlier in his career, he served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and directed a boys' home in Seattle.

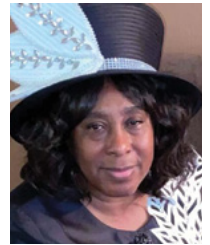


Jeanne Edwards (SAS '75), 74, of Southampton, Glenside and Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania, died April 21. She is remembered for her work as a director and executive director of social services throughout the tri-state area.

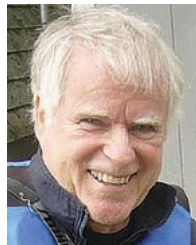


Judy Katherine Lucas (SAS '87), 80, of Toledo, Ohio, died May 23.

Juliet Lucas (SAS '92), 62, of Youngstown, Ohio, died July 16. She was a licensed social worker with Mercy Health for over 20 years and acquired numerous certifications in the field of social work with a focus on group therapy, case management and counseling. She dedicated her life to helping others by working with nonprofits in the area that assist people with chemical abuse and dreamed of opening a shelter for abused women. At the time of her passing, she was working on her doctorate.



Rolf E. White (SAS '67), 83, of Green Bay, Wisconsin, died June 9. In 1969, White accepted a position on the faculty of University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, where he served until 1998 and continued to teach after retirement. He helped found the NEW Community Clinic in 1971, which helped individuals who had low incomes or were uninsured, and served on the board as president until January.



Adina V. Reshotko (SAS '80), 86, of Denver, Colorado, died Sept. 15, 2020. She founded the Agnon Jewish Day School's preschool in Beachwood, Ohio, before returning to school for an MSSA and spending two decades as a clinical social worker.



Patricia C. Embrescia (SAS '97), 73, of Chagrin Falls, Ohio, died May 27. She worked for several social service agencies before starting her own private practice, Wellspring Clinical Counseling and Consulting Services LLC, in 2003. Her specialties included substance abuse, plus marriage, youth and family counseling, which kept her engaged in ever-changing societal complexities.



Nancy Ruth Beheim (SAS '81), 88, of Fairview Park, Ohio, died April 26. After receiving her MSSA, she was employed as a geriatric social worker by the Lakewood Division of Aging until 1998. She was an active board member and volunteer with a number of Lutheran and community agencies, including the Long Term Care Ombudsman and Cogswell Hall in Cleveland.



James Harris (SAS '70), 92, of Fruitland Park, Florida, died March 3. Harris retired from the Cuyahoga County Department of Human Services in 1987, having served 23 years as a social worker and administrator in various departments. During his tenure there, he instituted a Night Placement Program for the homeless. He also was a pastor at two churches in Ohio until nearly a decade ago.

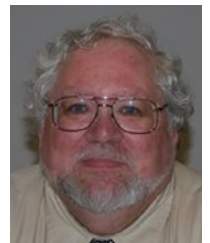


Robert Wallace Malcolm (SAS '81), 67, of Toms River, New Jersey, died in February.

Susan Marie Thomas (SAS '86), 64, of Akron, Ohio, died May 9.



Michael Thomas Peightal (SAS '98), 71, of Erie, Pennsylvania, died April 5. He was a mental health counselor at Hamot Hospital and retired from Erie County Care Management as a case manager.



Bringing international perspective to the local community

As an undergraduate student studying broadcast journalism at the Communication University of China, Nanguang College, Yixi Ren didn't know much about social work. But she's always had a passion for helping people—a quality she attributes to her decision to pivot her career path and came to the United States to enroll in graduate school.

A fan of the NBA, and the Cavaliers in particular, Ren decided to settle in Cleveland, soon discovering, applying and being accepted to the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences' nationally ranked social work program.

During her first year, she fulfilled her interprofessional education (IPE) requirement at Case Western Reserve's Student Run Health Clinic—an experience that taught her how to collaborate with other health sciences students and also gave her a chance to educate her peers on what social workers do, which she discovered many of her classmates didn't fully understand.

"One of the most important things I learned from my IPE experience is that social workers, doctors, nurses and other health providers all need to work together to have the best possible results," she said. We don't accomplish nearly as much working individually in our respective fields."

Through her studies, Ren discovered her passion for creating change in communities, leading her to conduct her second-year field placement with the Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development's Community Innovation Network (CIN), a Mandel School research and training center focused on cultivating collaborative community change. The internship, she said, taught her how to better communicate with people to identify their needs and issues, which, in turn, allows her to make more specific recommendations to her clients.

A connection at CIN helped Ren begin providing community outreach and support to residents of Cleveland's Asiatown neighborhood during the pandemic. As a community organizer, she offered important services during a difficult time, especially given the rise in discrimination toward members of the Asian American Pacific Islander community.



Yixi Ren

Empowering immigrants, educating residents on their civil rights, and working to create a sense of community among neighbors and resident leaders has inspired Ren and sparked her interest in policy, advocacy and systemic issues—interests she plans to continue to explore in her new home of Cleveland after graduation.

During the pandemic, Ren has spent some of her free time trying to become a better advocate—finding role models on the internet, learning their stories and understanding their challenges and successes.

"I'm learning how individuals started doing advocacy work," Ren said, "and trying to follow in their footsteps."

—Melanie Klass

Proudly Announcing

The 2021 Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences Alumni Association Award Winners/Hall of Achievement Inductees and Prestigious Honorees

Recognized during the virtual homecoming weekend
Mandel School Alumni Celebration Oct. 22.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA

Margaret M. Kennedy (SAS '78)



NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Jennifer L. Hawkins (MNO '00)



LOUIS STOKES COMMUNITY SERVICE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Melanie Powell (MNO '94)



PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Diana M. Cyganovich (SAS, LAW '81)



EARLY CAREER SUCCESS AWARD

Sarah R. McNelis (SAS '15)



LOUIS STOKES COMMUNITY SERVICE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Shareefah T. Sabur (MNO '93)

The Mandel School also recognizes alumni receiving honors from Case Western Reserve University and other significant social work institutions:



CWRU NEWTON D. BAKER DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Jane Abrahams Daroff (SAS '85)



2021 NASW SOCIAL WORK PIONEER

John A. Yankey, PhD

Watch the event highlights at
youtube.com/MandelSchoolofAppliedSocialSciencesCleveland.



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SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Thank You!

The ability of the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences to thrive and increase scholarship support for our exceptional students is due to our loyal alumni and friends who donate their time, talent and financial resources to the school and its mission.

Whether you are a mentor, volunteer, connector or donor, we are truly grateful for your support. Every gift makes a difference and is appreciated.



To recognize our supporters who made gifts from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, we have created an online honor roll. Visit case.edu/socialwork/give/honor-roll-donors or scan this QR code.

