

# CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

OF PROFESSIONALS FOR PURPOSEFUL ACTION

100  
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR PURPOSEFUL ACTION  
1915 2015

GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF SOCIAL WORK AND  
SOCIAL RESEARCH  
OF  
BRYN MAWR  
COLLEGE

2015 marks the 100-year anniversary of the establishment of the Bryn Mawr Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. During this time of reflection and celebration, we recognize the extraordinary achievements of our alumni. Through diverse and successful careers, the featured professionals in this piece represent the positive social change and impact our students, faculty and alumni make with individuals and within society.

For a schedule of centennial events, visit [brynmawr.edu/socialwork](http://brynmawr.edu/socialwork).



## FOSTERING LGBTQ EQUALITY IN SEATTLE

As the associate director in Seattle University's Office of Multicultural Affairs, Neem builds bridges across the campus community to support students of color and LGBTQ students at the private Jesuit Catholic university.

"I'm in a position to shift a larger institutional culture and build a healthy campus climate," Neem said. "We're working to create the environment they want to be part of, in an institutional setting that historically was not designed with them in mind."

In the spring of 2012, Neem mentored students involved in the Diversity and Equity Education Program as they led the campus community in organizing the "Amplify Voices: A Queer Justice Rally." Letters to the university's president, petitions and symbolic events highlighted support for inclusion of LGBTQ students on campus, including marriage equality in a Catholic context.

Within the larger Seattle community, Neem co-chairs the city's LGBT Commission, representing the concerns of LGBTQ citizens to the mayor, city council and city departments. In 2013, she spearheaded the effort to kick off the Seattle Pride Celebration by raising the Pride flag at City Hall, showing the city's support of the LGBTQ community. During this time, she also advocated in solidarity with workers for the Seattle Space Needle to settle a fair labor contract and fly the Pride flag.

"Throughout my career, I've always felt a deep sense of interconnect- edness, and I've tried to embody the position as advocate – for indi- viduals and communities," Neem said. "Bryn Mawr is where I learned to articulate the difference between altruism and solidarity."

*"In my life and in my career, I want to actively create the kind of world I want to wake up in every day – a world without all of this inequality," said **Sabina Neem, MSS/MLSP '07.***

*Photo credit: Nate Gowdy Photography*

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF HELPING FAMILIES GET OFF TO THE RIGHT START

As the oldest of four girls and a lifelong participant in Girls Scouts, **JoAnne Fischer, MSS '73**, always considered herself a leader, a feminist and someone interested in the development of girls and women.

Her time at Bryn Mawr, however, exposed her to a wider world and helped set the course that would ultimately become her life's work. During Fischer's second-year field placement, she worked directly with Walter Lear, a physician and community activist who was also the regional health commissioner for the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

"It was such a non-traditional placement," Fischer said. "Walter [Lear] taught me about the political economy of healthcare, and I taught him about feminism."

Lear would later hire Fischer as a consultant to kick-start the women's health movement in Pennsylvania, which ultimately led to Fischer working at the Maternity Care Coalition (MCC), an organization Lear helped found in 1980.

MCC improves maternal and child health and wellbeing through re- search, advocacy and services for families. More than 5,000 families are served every year through initiatives that include the state's largest Early Head Start program, Cribs for Kids and MOMobile program.

Now celebrating her 25th year as executive director, Fischer has helped MCC grow from a staff of three with a budget of \$116,000 to a staff of 100 with a budget of more than \$7.5 million, but there's much work to be done.

"So many women are just out there on their own during such a trans- formational time in their lives and their children's lives," Fischer said. "It's really very urgent and critical to get families off to a good start earlier, and there's so much we can do if we just make this a social priority."



## INTERNATIONAL CLINICAL WORK REVOLVES AROUND SEEING PEOPLE IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

"In Kuwait, one of the most important things is to get married and have a good job," said **Nicholas Scull, MSS '02**. "There's such a stigma surrounding mental health services, so if word got out that you were seeking services, it could have a devastating impact on your personal and professional life."

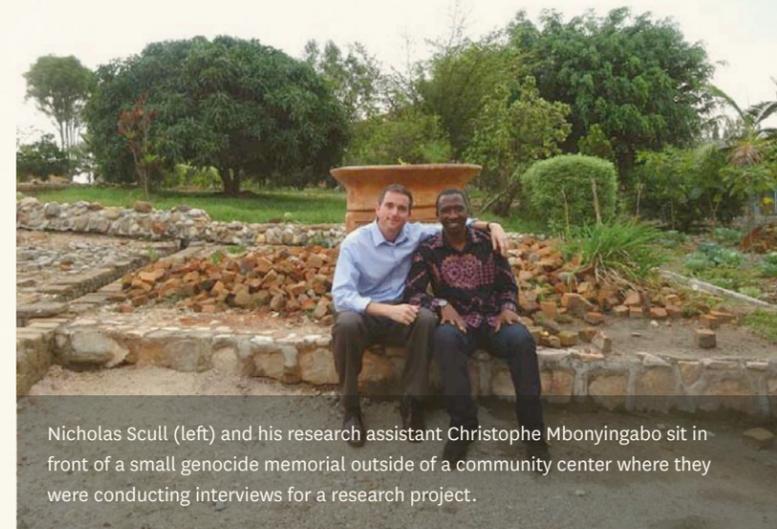
Scull moved to Kuwait to serve as the clinical director for the Fawzia Sultan Rehab Institute, the only nonprofit health clinic in Kuwait and one of the only providers of community mental health services in a region of 3 million people.

"We do a lot of work in the community trying to educate people about mental health services and mental health topics including anxiety and depression," Scull said. "People have been incredibly courageous in seeking services, which is why we've grown to a staff of six clinicians serving more than 400 people a month."

In addition to his clinical work, Scull serves as the assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for American University of Kuwait and pursues research related to the Rwandan genocide in 1994. On his most recent trip to Rwanda, Scull interviewed imprisoned Hutu perpetrators about their motivation for killing their Tutsi neighbors.

"Bryn Mawr opened my eyes to how social work can be applied in international settings," Scull said. "As a clinician, it's easy to focus on

the individual, but Bryn Mawr was incredibly transformative in terms of helping me to see people in the context of their environment and to focus on the macro-level to affect the greatest change."



Nicholas Scull (left) and his research assistant Christophe Mbonyingabo sit in front of a small genocide memorial outside of a community center where they were conducting interviews for a research project.

## A CHAMPION OF LITERACY AND EDUCATION IN AFRICA

If every child received an education, 171 million people would be lifted out of poverty.

As the girl's education program advisor for Room to Read, a non- profit organization that focuses on child literacy and gender equality in education in Asia and Africa, **Kyra Turner-Zogbekor, PhD '13**, advises the organization's strategy in Tanzania. She helps train staff and implement life skills and academic support programs for teen- age girls in the country.

"When I applied to Bryn Mawr's doctoral program in social work, I was very direct with what I wanted to do," Turner-Zogbekor said. "I wrote that I wanted to work with nonprofit organizations in Africa to build capacity to relieve educational inequality, so everything I set out to do, I'm doing with Room to Read."

Turner-Zogbekor was uniquely prepared for this position. After earning a master's degree in social work, she joined the Peace Corps and spent two years volunteering for a girls' education and empow- erment program in the West African nation of Togo.

As a doctoral student at Bryn Mawr, she received several awards, in- cluding a Fulbright to Ghana, to study how adult education benefits women and their communities.

"Bryn Mawr allowed me to pursue what I was interested in from the very start," Turner-Zogbekor said. "Through my Fulbright, inde- pendent study and dissertation, I found an environment that was incredibly supportive. The next step for me is building on the work I'm doing now to facilitate multiple organizations working together to improve education for all children."



*Photo credit: Courtesy of Room to Read*

## LEADING CHILD WELFARE OVERSIGHT AND POLICY TO PROTECT MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN



As the Southeast regional director for the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare's Office of Children, Youth and Families, **Raheemah Shamsid-Deen Hampton, MSS '02**, leads the oversight of public and private child welfare agencies for six counties. She supervises a staff of 25, oversees close to \$1 billion in child welfare funding and is responsible for more than 100,000 children receiving in-home, placement and prevention services.

"I'm doing the work I'm meant to do – it's my life's calling to listen, take it all in and make the right decisions for children and families," Shamsid-Deen Hampton said. "But because I have so much responsibility and oversee so many services that impact children, I always

say that the day this work is no longer in my heart, is the day I walk away."

Shamsid-Deen Hampton didn't initially intend to work in child welfare. Two years after earning her bachelor's degree in communication arts, she took a job as a line staffer in the Philadelphia Department of Human Services, working within the foster care system to connect clients with services and monitor at-risk families.

"In doing that work, I realized that this is where I was supposed to be, and I wanted the formal training to continue advocating for children and addressing the very real issues families were facing," Shamsid-Deen Hampton said.

She was selected to participate in the Child Welfare Education for Leadership program, a cooperative effort among the United States Administration for Children and Families, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, the Pennsylvania Child and Youth Administrators and eleven accredited schools of social work in Pennsylvania, including Bryn Mawr. The program provides educational funding for public child welfare personnel in an effort to strengthen child welfare services.

"When I looked around at my supervisors, the people in leadership positions in child welfare, all of those people went to Bryn Mawr," Shamsid-Deen Hampton said. "Bryn Mawr was my first choice and the best decision I ever made. It gave me the confidence and validation I needed to work on the policy, research and analysis side and see how it all comes together to protect vulnerable children in Pennsylvania."

## PROVIDING A SOCIAL WORK CURRICULUM FOR NEW DOCTORS

**Maria Hervada-Page, MSS '84**, has always been drawn to the medical environment. As an undergraduate student at St. Joseph's University, she worked in a hospital and was able to see a variety of professionals in action. But amidst all of the physicians, nurses and administrators, Hervada-Page was drawn to the support social workers provided to patients.

Now the assistant residency director at Thomas Jefferson University Department of Family & Community Medicine, Hervada-Page is in charge of the behavioral science curriculum for residents in family medicine.

Based in a primary care outpatient setting with more than 75,000 patient visits a year, Hervada-Page works with residents to include the biopsychosocial model in their health evaluations and helps them to improve their interviewing, communication and cultural competency skills.

"My role is not a traditional social work role, but that's the beauty of the social work profession – there are so many different things you can do with it."

Hervada-Page also serves as the Thomas Jefferson University program director for Bridging the Gaps, a seven-week interprofessional

community health internship that pairs health science and social work students with 15 community agencies. She has also provided clinical supervision for social work students for the past 20 years.

"The social work students I see today are pursuing this profession for the same reasons I did – a commitment to social justice, client advocacy and working with underserved populations," Hervada-Page said. "The core values haven't changed, and that's refreshing."

