



USM School of Social Work Newsletter

DECEMBER 2006

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

Alumni Association Elects 2006 Officers



President
Amy Gibbons



Vice President
Michael Long



Treasurer
Charlotte Newman



Secretary
Cynthia Bradley

The USM School of Social Work Alumni Association elected its 2006 officers at its organizational meeting which was held at the Silver Star Casino on November 16, 2006.

Amy Gibbons '97 was elected President, Michael Long '06, Vice President, Charlotte Newman '06, Treasurer, and Cynthia Bradley '06, Secretary. They assumed their duties immediately and will serve for two years.

Alumni Interest Survey

The USM School of Social Work Alumni Association wants to be a meaningful organization that focuses on the needs of its members -- AND WE NEED YOUR HELP.

Please take a moment to complete and return the attached Alumni Interest Survey so that we know what is important to you in YOUR alumni association.

Each alumnus is encouraged to be actively involved in the alumni association. If you are interested in becoming more actively involved, please contact Amy Gibbons at amy.gibbons@millcreekcenters.com or Barry Haywood at barry.haywood@usm.edu to discuss the many opportunities awaiting you.

The Survey is also available under "Alumni/Friends" on the USM School of Social Work website, usm.edu/socialwork.

Alumni Recognition Awards

Special recognition & Awards were given to the following alumni during special ceremonies during the Fall Colloquium:

Special Recognition : Hannah Boatright and Tom Velie

Distinguished Alumni : Maurice Calestro, Tammy Miller, and Phil Smith

Field Instructor : Katherine McKee

Help Us Locate “Missing” Alumni

Over the years we have lost contact with many of our alumni, and we need your help in locating them so that we can reestablish communication with them.

Attached with this Newsletter you will find two documents listing our “missing” alumni. If you know one or more of these graduates of the School of Social Work, please contact them and ask them to go to the school’s website, [usm.edu/social work](http://usm.edu/social%20work), and complete the Alumni Update Form under “Alumni/Friends”.

Once we get their current information, we can put them on our mailing lists and be sure that they begin receiving information about all of the exciting things going on in the School of Social Work and the Alumni Association.

Gulf Coast Students Christmas Project

The USM Gulf Coast MSW Class of 2009 assisted in the Holiday Toy Drive which is co-sponsored by the Back Bay Mission and the St. Vincent dePaul Society, both of Biloxi. Each class member purchased individual toys, gifts, and gift cards which were delivered to St. Vincent dePaul Society on November 30. The class intends to take on more projects after the New Year.

Students Inducted into Phi Alpha, Social Work Honor Society

CONGRATULATIONS! to the following students who will receive MSW degrees from the School of Social Work Program at the Gulf Park Campus in May have been inducted into membership to the Phi Alpha Honorary Society :

Constance Avera, Diamondhead

Marion Shannon Coleman, Gautier

David Moore, Biloxi

Helani Maria Schurfield, Long Beach

Erica Deshaune Thomas, Jackson County

Alana Bowie Williams, Long Beach

Membership in Phi Alpha is the highest honor which can be received at the USM School of Social Work, and is available only to those students who have attained excellence in scholarship and have demonstrated a commitment to the standards, ethics, and goals of the social work profession.

The induction ceremony was conducted by Dr. Michael Forster, Director of the School of Social Work, assisted by Drs. Pat Davis and Ray Scurfield.

A Special Award, Social Work Field Instructor of the Year, was presented to Phillip B. Smith, LCSW, Director of Social Work at Memorial Behavior Health, Gulfport.

The ceremony was a part of a reception honoring all social work students in the Gulf Coast program. It was hosted by the USM-GC School of Social Work Advisory Board which is chaired by Gail Esters, LCSW.

USM Gulf Coast MSW Students Elect Association Officers

The following Student Association Officers for 2006 - 2008 were elected by fellow MSW students on the Gulf Coast :

President – Johnny Williams – Ocean Springs

Vice-President – Ann Costilow - Diamondhead

Secretary – Rosalind Thomas - Pascagoula

Treasurer – Jennifer MacKenzie – Long Beach

Advisory Board Representative – Jeannine Finley – Gautier

Outgoing Association Officers Stephanie Sellier, Angela Ashford, Sylvia Mark, Shontel Lawrence, and Marion Coleman assisted in the ceremony.

Scholarship Awards Presented to Gulf Coast Students

The following MSW students at USM Gulf Coast campus have received scholarship awards for the school year of 2006/07.

- **Marion Coleman** received the Beulah Compton Scholarship which is awarded to an outstanding student on either campus who is a member of a minority population. The award was presented by Virginia Adolph, USMGC Advisory Board Member, State NASW Board Member, and Past Chair of the Mississippi State Licensing Board.
- **David Moore** was awarded the Barbara Pease Scholarship which is awarded to an outstanding student on either campus who anticipates a career in Social Work with Military Personnel or Veterans. David is retired from the Air Force and is working at the VA while attending graduate school. The award was presented by Dr. Ray Scurfield who had an outstanding Social Work career with the Veteran Administration before joining the USM School of Social Work faculty.
- **Alana Williams** received the Betty Spencer Scholarship which is awarded to a MSW student on the Gulf Coast campus who plans a Social Work Career with children and families. This is a new scholarship that was established in 2005 to acknowledge the contributions on long time social worker Betty Spencer. Betty Spencer presented the award.

Mark Your Calendars

- **MS NASW Annual Conference**, March 8-9, 2007, Hilton Hotel, Jackson, MS **“Social Workers: A Source of Hope and Health”**. Be sure to attend USM Alumni Reception on Thursday, March 8.
- **4th Annual Aspire Scholarship Benefit Concert**, Friday February 23, 2007 @ 7:30 p.m. at Saenger Theater in downtown Hattiesburg. Presented by the **Family Network Partnership**. Concert admission is \$7. Tickets sold at the Hattiesburg Convention Center. For ticket information, all 601-266-6675 or 601-268-3220. Featuring local Hattiesburg artists, members of the Southern Miss Repertory Dance Company, Southern Miss Theater, Hattiesburg Civic

Light Opera, Paul Lee, Hub City Swing Band and Pine Belt Youth Ballet

Proceeds support educational scholarships for youth served by the Family Network Partnership

E-mail newsletters—quick, easy

Using an e-mail newsletter can be an effective, low-cost method for staying in touch with your customers. It helps reduce churn and can easily generate more business from customers you've already spent a great deal of effort to win. Since there are no mailing and printing costs involved, it's also very gentle to your bottom-line. Another benefit is the almost instantaneous delivery that e-mail affords. You don't have to worry whether the Post Office will get the newsletter to your customers in time for them to take advantage of a special offer.

Microsoft Office Word makes it simple to create and send e-mail newsletters. Customers will appreciate the regular communication and you could be rewarded with more business from your existing customer base.

Create a customized template



Add your company logo, change the colors to reflect the ones your business uses, put in your business address, phone numbers, and Web site address—in other words, develop a basic template reflecting your company's look that will stay the same for each issue.

It's a good idea to use Web Layout view (on the View menu, click Web Layout) when creating your newsletter. That's the look your customers will be seeing when they receive your e-mail.

Fonts

When choosing the fonts that you'll be using for headlines and body text, a good rule is to never use more than 2-3 fonts in a newsletter. More cause confusion and make your efforts look less professional. Be creative with the ones you do choose, though. Use different sizes and colors, and use bold and italics to add variety without confusing the look of the newsletter. You can add these custom styles to your template's style palette so that they're instantly available.

Finally, delete any features that you won't be using. Once you're done with these general changes, save the result as a Word template.

Add articles and graphics

One distinct difference between a printed newsletter and an e-mail version is the amount of text to include. Unless you know that all your readers will be interested in a longer version, you should keep the amount of information to about 1,000 words or less. Anything more becomes tiresome to read online, and you may lose their interest before they read the items you really want them to see.

What to include

Some items to think about including might be introductions to new employees, recent awards presented to your company, specials and discounts on products or services, announcements of new products, and information on new ways to take advantage of your products or services. Don't include items that might be of interest to only a few customers; you want to capture and hold the interest of as many readers as possible.

Add graphics



Add graphics or pictures with captions to help break up the text and create some visual interest. But make sure that whatever you add relates to the adjacent text. A picture of the company dog might be cute, but if the story surrounding it is about a new product, the picture will only serve to confuse your readers.

Contact information

Be sure to include contact information in more than one place. Not only should it be part of your master template, you should include "For more information..." contacts in every article where it's appropriate.

Web links

Include links to the company Web site wherever you can. Be sure to update the site to include the information you are referring them to. It's easy to include hyperlinks in your newsletter that will take customers right to your Web site or get them started with an e-mail to your sales staff.

Proofread

When you've completed your newsletter, it's time for one of the most important steps of all—proofreading. Take several passes through the material, looking for different things each time.