

Social Work

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board of Siena College's Social Work Program is composed of a wide variety of persons whose input and assistance is important to the Program. The Advisory Board supports the program's mission to prepare undergraduate baccalaureate students for competent generalist social work practice.

Interested in serving on the Advisory Board as a voting member or as part of a particular committee or project?

**Contact Joe Zoske at
518-783-4123**

Advisory Board for 2010-2011:

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*Valerie Albino**
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Molly Chamberlain
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**Alumni of the Program*

The 1980s and Siena Social Work



Professor Bob Rivas - Arriving at Siena College 1981

Where to begin? This same question challenged me when I was hired by Siena in 1980 to consult with the then Department of Sociology and Social Work. In 1981 I was hired to change the landscape of this arrangement and cultivate both a new department and a new major. The eighties saw the primary development of what we have now: a free standing, independent, well-supported department that offers a social work major to students. The transition to a full major was a difficult one. We hired new faculty members and began the curriculum revision process. In previous years students could complete a group of courses, including field, and earn a concentration in Social Work. The transition required changing the major courses and choosing new support courses. A new Social Work Department was created to support the new major. This required that Social Work be separated from the Sociology Department. This too brought challenges, but change always does. In addition to this, faculty began the process for approval of the new major with the NYS Education Department and national accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education. After completing extensive written self studies, we had site visits from the above organizations and this led to our approval by the state and our initial accreditation by CSWE. Our continuous accreditation since the early eighties documents that we have continuously met national standards. Frankly, I am not sure how we accomplished all of this in such relatively short period of time, but it happened. In thinking about the eighties, I remember the students who went through this time period with us. The change process brought us together as a community: students, faculty and field instructors. By now, many of our eighties graduates have twenty or more years of social work experience. I also particularly think about several graduates whose career accomplishments have taken very different directions. So, our eighties graduates model how flexible our field is and how well Siena has prepared our graduates to be well-rounded persons and professionals.

As the 1960s mantra suggests, "The only constant is change." That was certainly true for the 1980s.



Messages from 1980s Siena Social Work Alumni

What do I remember about my years at Siena? Pulling "all nighters" to finish a paper or study for a big exam. I also remember doing my research in the library using the card catalog and typing those papers on an IBM Selectric typewriter! My...how times have changed!

Beth Pacini, Class of 1987

Some 1980s Movies: E.T., Officer and a Gentleman, Flashdance, The Breakfast Club, The Big Chill, Mississippi Burning, St. Elmo's Fire, Rain Man, Indiana Jones. Platoon, Driving Miss Daisy

I was trying to figure out what major would best serve the Church as I was seriously considering serving as a Franciscan Friar when I came to Siena. As a man who felt a call to be more a man for everyone than for someone, I thought that social service was perfect. Since then I have applied my working knowledge to assist the people of Greenville SC and other cities in the past with housing, food distribution, immigration law, emergency services to hospitals, police departments, prisons and jail, and to people seeking second careers, eviction relief, even dentures. The city here will pull teeth but not give any. I have been tremendously gratified that God would use what I learned at Siena and through the friars to be a safety net and a dignity for people in need. I have received much more than I have given. God is like that.

Fr. Patrick Tuttle, OFM, Class of 1987

1980s events & trivia: Reaganomics, AIDS pandemic, fall of the Berlin Wall, Mount St. Helens erupts, the Challenger explodes, Summer Olympics in Moscow boycotted, TV show Simpsons and MTV airs

From the moment I stepped foot on campus I knew I wanted to be a social worker and that has never changed. It was a Siena Marketing professor that introduced me to the emerging profession of Employee Assistance Professional. Imagine being able to help people where they are most of the day - at work! I pursued EAP work and have been in the field for the past 18 years. I have had the wonderful pleasure of helping some of our country's largest and best known employers develop programs that meet the emotional, family and health needs of their employees. I have developed skills I never knew I possessed and have been able to grow both personally and professionally in ways I would never have imaged when I stepped foot into Intro to Social Welfare. Today I am the Commercial Sales Director for the nation's largest privately held health improvement company. I use the skills I developed in my BSW to help organizations develop programs that meet the social emotional needs of their employees before concerns begin to negatively affect work and quality of life. I love going to work every day.

Kathy Garner Greco, Class of 1989

1980s music scene saw BIG hair such as Bon Jovi

My favorite memories of my days as a student at Siena are the wonderful times with wonderful friends! I also had close relationships with the social work faculty and the friars. There was, and still is, a tremendous sense of community throughout campus. After a career in social work, I am blessed to have had the opportunity to come back to Siena as a staff member, and now have the privilege of being the Director of Alumni Relations.

Mary Beth Finnerty, Class of 1985

Sign on to the Siena College Social Work Alumni Facebook Page. Stay in touch, post jobs and network. Reconnect!

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Siena-College-Social-Work-Alumni/128440443833947?v=wall&ref=ts>



Alumni and BSW Practice

My BSW experience at Siena was so instrumental to whom I am today, not only as a social worker, but as a person. I believe this speaks to the overall Siena experience, which I fondly remember, and shared numerous stories with my daughter as we strolled through the campus. When I think about my employment history over the last 20 plus years, I give much credit to my BSW experience...the small classrooms, the assignments, the internships and a sense of family in the program. I think of an assignment Bob gave us every time I hear the song "Little Pink Houses" by John Cougar Mellancamp. I remember thinking to myself...I don't care about what the song means...I just like the tune. But that assignment got me to think about how things are in our society and it helped to challenge my thinking about things. Since graduating as a BSW and completing my MSW from SUNY Albany, I have worked in a variety of settings. The last six years I have been in private practice working with individuals and families. I rent office space very close to my home, and am working part-time (3 days a week) right now so I can also complete my other full time job of being a mom of three. I feel honored to have been a part of the Siena Community and I am very thankful for my experiences in the BSW program at Siena.

Cathy Hartz-Madigan, Class of 1986

Following my graduation from Siena in 1985, I worked for NJ State's Division of Youth and Family Services for one year before Rutgers University where I received my MSW. While attending Rutgers, I interned at an alcohol and drug addiction hospital which hired me upon graduation. I also worked part time performing parenting evaluations with an agency which provided services to DYFS. After giving birth to my first child in 1990, I segued my way into private practice on a part time basis. In 1992, I began fee-for-service work with a group practice for a year before venturing off on my own into private practice. My first office was in Princeton, NJ where I practiced for 6 years before moving to our current home in Bucks County, PA. I have had a private practice in Doylestown for 11 years. I work with adults, both individuals and couples, and see a wide range of issues with my clients. The majority are experiencing an adjustment disorder, mood disorder, relationship issues, and/or alcohol and drug dependency. I also work with people who are having a difficult time dealing with grief issues, parenting, and divorce. I consult for a local divorce mediation agency providing co-parenting counseling and hosting webinars for their clients.

Deirdre Shaffer, MSW, Class of 1985

I graduated with my social work degree from Siena in 1986, then worked four years as a children's counselor at Unity House Families in Crisis (domestic violence program) in Troy, NY. I then chose to enter the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine de 'Ricci in 1990. I have ministered in our retreat houses in Niskayuna, NY; McLean, VA; and Miami, FL. My social work degree has been extremely valuable as I continue to journey with people from all walks of life and a variety of cultural backgrounds. A conversation with a retreatant may include struggles with family situations, health situations, 12-step recovery issues or the results of sexual abuse. I finished my Master's degree in Theology at Barry University in Miami, made my final profession in 1999, and moved back up North in 2004. I am currently the Administrator at the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center here in Niskayuna.

Sr. Susan M. Zengulis, OP, Class of 1986

One of the things I will always remember about my Siena Experience is my spring break at St. Francis Inn. I recently saw a posting on Father Dennis' page from the Spring Break Trip in 2010. It made me stop and pause for a minute and remember how a Spring Break in Philly taught me about human dignity, respect and the need we all have to be accepted. I have often referenced that experience when working with young people in my parish's faith formation program. As a Social Work major, I remember climbing the stairs in Siena Hall, Wednesday night evening prayer in the Chapel, being legal to drink for six months and then not, the opening of the townhouses, basketball games being held on campus, and the support and encouragement of the Campus Ministry Team, Father Jerome, Sister Rosemary, Father Kevin, and retreats at Silver Bay.

Maria Morris-Groves, Class of 1988



In Memory

Kellie Duggan
Class of 2010



Kellie was a strong role model for her generation to serve those in need.

Janet Jones
Advisory Board
Member



Jan served as a long time advisory board member and was instrumental in helping advance the board and program in a number of areas, particularly with the social work scholarship.

CLASS OF 2010



L to R: Ruth Banegas, Allison Lindemann, Julianne Kallenburg, Sarah Owens, Laura DiNicola, Nora Boyle, Theresa Wojtecki, Jennifer Perry, Tania Miolan, Nicolas Mojica

*Siena College Social Work
Department*
515 Loudon Road
Loudonville, NY 12211

If you would like to be removed from the mailing list or have other inquiries about the Department please contact Joe at jzoske@siena.edu or at 518-783-4261.



