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## E-Pulse, 2012-02

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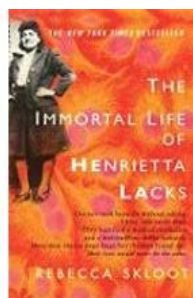
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Edition**
*electronic  
newsletter*

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## The Legacy of Henrietta Lacks Lives On



David "Sonny" Lacks — a son of Henrietta Lacks, as featured in the New York Times bestseller, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* — will address his mother's legacy in a lecture for the community, "The U.S. Healthcare System: Reflected in the Lives of Henrietta Lacks and Her Family," on **Tuesday, March 27, at 1:30 p.m.** in the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University. David Lacks will be accompanied by one of his adult children.



In 1951, a sample of cancer cells from Henrietta Lacks was taken without her consent and used for medical research. While the research obtained through the use of Henrietta Lacks' cells led to advances in cancer treatment, the polio vaccine, and gene mapping, the Lacks family neither benefited from, nor knew of the research. Yet Henrietta Lacks' cells are still the most widely used in medical research today.

This free event is sponsored by the Governors State University Intellectual Life Committee, the GSU College of Health and Human Services, and the GSU College of Education.

Though the event is free, seating is limited and online registration is required by March 20, 2012, at [www.govst.edu/Henrietta\\_Lacks/](http://www.govst.edu/Henrietta_Lacks/)

### Reception and Book-Signing

GSU students, faculty, and staff are also invited to a reception and book-signing featuring David "Sonny" Lacks on **Monday, March 26, from 5 - 7 p.m.** in the Lobby of the Center for Performing Arts. Though the reception is free, online registration is required by March 16 at [www.govst.edu/Sonny\\_Lacks\\_Reception](http://www.govst.edu/Sonny_Lacks_Reception).

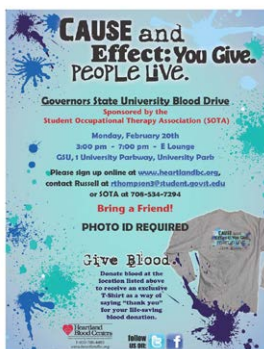
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## You Give, People Live: GSU Blood Drive Set February 20

The Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) will sponsor a **Blood Drive** on Monday, February 20,

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from 3 to 7 p.m. in the E Lounge at GSU.

Interested donors are asked to register online [here](#) (Heartland Blood Centers). Photo I.D. is required. Donors will receive an exclusive "Cause and Effect" T-shirt (see left) as a "thank you" for their life-saving blood donation.

For additional information, contact Russell Thompson at [rthompson3@student.govst.edu](mailto:rthompson3@student.govst.edu) or SOTA at 708.534.7294.

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## Unique Scholarship Opportunity for CHHS Students Now Available!

[Health Care Jobs for Chicago Southland](#) is offering a unique opportunity for students enrolled in Governors State University's College of Health and Human Services. As steady job growth is predicted in the healthcare industry, \$250,000 has been set aside to assist existing health and health science students with scholarships and supportive services that encourage development and preparation of a well-trained, able and agile health care workforce.

Eligible students will be awarded \$500 scholarships that may be used toward tuition, fees, books and/or graduation expenses. Scholarships are issued on a first-come, first-served basis while funding is available. U.S. Military veterans receive priority status.

### More Than Just a Scholarship

As students prepare for success, financial assistance is only one piece of the puzzle. To further assist students, the program provides comprehensive support services in addition to the scholarship funds. Support services include:

- Free childcare at GSU's on-campus [Family Development Center](#) (as long as the individual is a student, and throughout the first 90 days of employment);
- Life skills and economic empowerment coaching (based on individual need);
- Resume writing, interview preparation, and job placement services (upon completion of degree or certificate program);
- Job readiness training (up to 36 hours, if needed).

Note: All scholarship recipients are required to complete a 30-minute orientation with Health Care Jobs for Chicago Southland staff and attend a one-hour Job Developer Assessment session/meeting.

### How to Obtain Your Scholarship Application Packet

Application packets for Health Care Jobs for Chicago Southland Scholarships may be obtained at several locations:

- Hantack House (The CHHS Grants Office, located on the western edge of

- the campus);
- The CHHS Dean's Office, Room G156;
- From your Department Chair;
- Academic Resource Center — Room B1215, or contact ARC at 708.534.4508
- Or simply click [here](#).

### Application Deadline: May 7, 2012

As many industries experience lay-offs and job losses, the healthcare industry remains a critical driver in regional economies across the nation. Employment growth in the healthcare sector continues to be driven by significant increases in demand for healthcare and assistance because of an aging population and longer life expectancy. In addition, projected retirements for current healthcare workers will necessitate a pipeline of skilled individuals ready to enter health care occupations. [U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration]

Governors State University's Health Care Jobs for Chicago Southland is an equal opportunity program, awarded by the [U.S. Department of Labor \(DOL\) Employment and Training Administration \(ETA\)](#) with funding made possible through President Obama's [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009](#).

*(This workforce solution is funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The solution was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.)*

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## Social Work Student Honored as Lincoln Laureate

Every year an outstanding senior from each of the four-year, degree-granting institutions of higher learning in Illinois is named Student Laureate of The Lincoln Academy of Illinois. For the second year in a row, a Social Work student from the College of Health and Human Services has been honored as Lincoln Laureate.

This year's Lincoln Laureate from GSU is **Darwin Gordon** of Chicago.

Gordon, a senior in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree program and President of the GSU Social Work Student Organization, personifies the Lincoln Laureate model. Recipients are chosen for their commitment to the principles of democracy and humanity as embodied by Abraham Lincoln.

With his 4.0 GPA and enrollment in the University Honors Program, Gordon also exemplifies the outstanding academic achievement required of the Lincoln Laureate.

Gordon and other Lincoln Laureates received their awards at a November 5 ceremony at the Old State



Capitol in Springfield.

Gordon said he felt "excited, thankful, and appreciative" when he learned of his Lincoln Laureate award.

A returning student, Gordon, 43, feels he's "come a long way. I'm at a place right now in my life where I'm really focused. I thank God for keeping me around this long."

Gordon chose to study social work because of his life experiences and all the "ups and downs" he's gone through over the years. "I feel I can make a difference in other people's lives now. I'm all about change."

Gordon chose GSU for his social work education since his mentors and other people he admired at Kennedy King College attended GSU. He was Valedictorian of his class at Kennedy King.

Currently, Gordon is interning at the [Metropolitan Area Group for Igniting Civilization, Inc. \(MAGIC\)](#), a Woodlawn-based organization designed to offer positive programming, support and empowerment for at-risk youth. As a life skills instructor for the youth, Gordon firmly believes that providing youth with more positive activities to occupy their time will result in less neighborhood violence.

Gordon spends a great deal of time visiting the sick and shut-ins for his Masonic lodge. He also helps at a homeless men's shelter and visits the incarcerated relatives of his fellow parishioners.

"You may not even know the person," Gordon said. "But it means a lot for them to see a smiling face, just to stop by and say I'm here for you, I'll pray for you."

Gordon believes he's had "social work in me all along, but it hasn't come out until now."

"Darwin is an outstanding individual. He has set goals to further his education in preparation for impacting change in his community," said [Dr. Lorri Glass, Assistant Professor of Social Work](#). "He is an exemplary student with outstanding leadership skills. He is an excellent model of good citizenship and leadership."

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## Professor O'Shea Earns Faculty Excellence Award



Congratulations to [Dr. Roberta O'Shea](#), PT, Ph.D., Professor of Physical Therapy in the College of Health and Human Services, who was honored at this year's Convocation with a Faculty Excellence Award. This was the third Faculty Excellence Award Dr. O'Shea has received; the previous two were earned in 2005 and 2006.

In her introductory comments, GSU President Elaine P. Maimon noted that Dr. O'Shea is "truly the definition of excellence. Known for the depth of knowledge she brings to her Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) students, Dr. O'Shea has a reputation for straight talk, creativity, and easy rapport with her students."

Dr. Maimon made note of Dr. O'Shea's "exemplary" service to both the University and the community, including membership on five critical committees and involvement with the Neurology Section of the American Physical Therapy Association, and the community-based [Center for Independence Through Conductive Education](#) in Countryside.

Dr. O'Shea is also a "constant advocate for her students," President Maimon

said, "and generously provides pro bono services for people with disabilities. Dr. O'Shea is truly the definition of excellence."

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## Alcoholics Anonymous at GSU

Students, faculty and staff members of Governors State University are invited to attend closed meetings of **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)** at Governors State University on Thursdays between 6 and 7:15 p.m. in Room A2150.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Johnsie McAuley-Davis in Student Life at 708.235.7653 or 773.331.3760.

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## GSU Nursing Grads Honored as 'Pinnacle' Leaders

At the 14th Annual **Power of Nursing Leadership Networking and Luncheon** sponsored by the University of Illinois at Chicago last November, three GSU Nursing graduates were among 31 exemplary nurse leaders from across the state to receive a **Pinnacle Leader Recognition** award.

The three GSU graduates recognized include:

- **Maria Nehmer**, RN, MSN, of the University of Illinois Medical Center. Nehmer received her Master of Science in Nursing degree at GSU in 2004.
- **Brenda Rocha**, RN, DNP, of Advocate Condell Medical Center. Rocha received her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree in 2011.
- **Jacqueline Whitten**, MSN, DNP, of Advocate Trinity Medical Center. Whitten received her Master of Science in Nursing degree at GSU in 2001 and her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree in 2011.

All Pinnacle Leader Recognition award winners were nominated by their organizations.

The theme for this year's Power of Nursing was *New Challenges for Nursing in the 21st Century*. Serving as keynote speaker was Dr. David Satcher, MD, Ph.D., former U.S. Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health.

Satcher talked about nurses' exemplary leadership on health-related issues, as well as the challenges still to be faced in working toward health equity and the elimination of health disparities. Ethical leadership, Satcher said, is required to face these challenges and is comprised of three factors: integrity, civility, and community. Successful health outcomes depend on appropriately identifying the impact of social determinants of health and on partnering with communities to eliminate barriers to health and health disparities.

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## Health Admin Students State Their Case Before Real-World Experts

As part of their curriculum requirements, all graduate Health



Administration students are asked to participate in a final capstone project.

The students form teams and set about developing a business plan for either a new healthcare enterprise, or an expansion strategy for an existing healthcare organization.

"This experience is designed to have the students use all the knowledge they have

gained in the Master of Health Administration (MHA) program," noted Rupert Evans, Sr., DHA, MPA, FACHE, Assistant Professor and Associate Director of Graduate Programs in the Health Administration Department. "They're asked to demonstrate their ability to develop a thorough plan with realistic assumptions from start to finish."

An integral part of this experience involves presenting the plan before a panel of real-world health care leaders and administrators; the panel, representing a governing board, evaluates each team's plan and provides the students with constructive feedback.

Evaluating the students this year was a high-powered panel of health care industry leaders, including:

- **Robert Currie** — Chief Operating Officer at Aetna Better Health Illinois
- **Robert Clapp** — Senior Vice President for Hospital Affairs and Executive Director of Rush University Hospitals at Rush University Medical Center
- **Eric Conley** — Vice President of Operations at Northwestern Memorial Hospital
- **Michael Holmes** — EVP/COO at St. James Hospital and Health Centers
- **Michael Englehart** — President, Advocate South Suburban Hospital

The four student teams this year included:

**Team 1:** *Poro Vita Health Care* (A Chronic Disease Management and Treatment Company): Kimberly Hall, Ann Jaso, Srinivasa Kommasani, and Donna Wolf.

**Team 2:** *Forty Winks Sleep Center* (A Freestanding Sleep Disorders Center in Will County, IL): Jasmine Jackson, Ramya Myneni, and Theresa Quinn.

**Team 3:** *The Delta Care Network* (A Diabetes Treatment and Prevention Organization): Kranthi Kumar Akula, Cami Barreto, Dana Burnett, and Denise Franklin.

**Team 4:** *JML Corporation* (A Medical Billing Outsourcing Company): Michelle Bridges, Jasmine Butler, and Lori Gousse.

The team of health care industry professionals chose the *Forty Winks Sleep Center* as the best plan; they then provided all students with feedback on how to improve their proposals, and offered a wealth of pertinent career advice.

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## Get Ready for Run 4 Rehab — Revisited!

Start your training now for the Second Annual **Run 4 Rehab**, a 5k (3.1 mile) run and 2-mile walk sponsored by the Physical Therapy Student Association (PTSA) of Governors State University.

**Amy Flaherty** and **Andy Jellema**, first and second year Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) students, respectively, have teamed up as co-directors of the 2012 Run 4 Rehab. The event is scheduled for **Saturday, May 5, 2012**, beginning at 8 a.m. on the GSU campus.

Interested participants can **sign up online** for the run/walk event [here](#). Information is also available by visiting the Run 4 Rehab [Facebook](#) page. If you'd prefer to download a copy of the event brochure, click [here](#).

The Run 4 Rehab serves as a benefit to raise funds for the Miami-Marquette Challenge, a national competition between physical therapy schools to collect and distribute money for physical therapy research grants around the country.

Approximately \$400 was raised at last year's first-time event, in which 80 individuals participated. Awards were given to the overall male and female finishers, as well as the top three finishers in each age group.

The purpose of the PTSA is to strive to familiarize and enhance the students with knowledge of and participation in professional organizations such as the [American Physical Therapy Association](#), [Illinois Physical Therapy Association](#), and other physical therapy-related special interest groups; develop and augment leadership skills in students; promote service learning through community outreach programs; enhance students' and the public's knowledge of the physical therapy profession and Governors State University's physical therapy program.



*Joyce Sligar (left), University Lecturer in the Physical Therapy Department and Faculty Advisor to the PTSA, and second-year DPT student Andy Jellema (right), 2011 event director. Jellema is serving as co-director of the 2012 Run 4 Rehab, along with Amy Flaherty, a first-year DPT student.*

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## Senior Addiction Studies Lecturer Earns Distinguished Service Award

[Peter Palanca](#), a senior lecturer in Addiction Studies, has received the George Schwab Distinguished Service Award, presented annually on behalf of Illinois leaders in the field of substance use prevention and treatment.

Palanca received the award on September 9 at the annual conference of the [Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association \(IADDA\)](#). Recipients are selected based on their service to IADDA and the field, including leadership and expertise in the development of public policy.



Palanca is chairman of the advisory board of GSU's [Addiction Studies and](#)



[Behavioral Health Department](#) and holds a faculty appointment as senior lecturer of Addiction Studies in the College of Health and Human Services.

He is executive vice president and chief operating officer for Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, a statewide, nonprofit organization that advocates for people with substance use and mental health disorders.

A Homewood resident, Palanca has been a leader in the alcohol/drug prevention and treatment field for more than 30 years. He is current chairman of the board of the IADDA, and is one of 12 individuals appointed to the Children's Mental Health Partnership, the policy guiding group for children's mental health issues in Illinois. He is vice chair of the board of directors for the National Association for Children of Alcoholics, and is also a board member of Prevention Partnership, a non-profit prevention and health promotion agency located in Chicago.

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## Physical Therapy Faculty Member Earns Prestigious Award



[Robin D. Washington, PT, Ph.D., CRC](#), Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy, received the Sylvia Walker Education Award from the [National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns \(NAMRC\)](#).

The award is named after the late Dr. Sylvia Walker, a professor, researcher, and director of the Center for Socioeconomic and Disability Policy Studies at Howard University in Washington, D.C., the first federal research and training center focused on minority issues and disability.

"We're extremely proud that Dr. Washington received the Sylvia Walker Education Award," noted [Rebecca Wojcik, PT, Ed.D., GCS](#), Chair of GSU's Physical Therapy Department. "Dr. Washington clearly exemplifies the criteria upon which this award is based: excellence in rehabilitation education, commitment to student learning and development, a commitment to multiculturalism, and the ability to serve as an exemplary role model and mentor."

"I am so honored to receive an award named after Sylvia Walker," said Washington. "She was so well-respected by her peers and the community, both nationally and internationally. She increased awareness regarding issues related to people with disabilities. She helped break down both attitudinal and architectural barriers for people with disabilities so that they could gain full participation within society."

Washington was presented with the Sylvia Walker Education Award at the annual NAMRC conference in Atlanta. In his letter of support, Larry Bishop, Development Officer for the Department of Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services, writes that he was impressed with Washington's "love of social justice and cultural diversity, her dedication to her students' learning and development, and her long-term commitment to the field of rehabilitation."

Washington recently was appointed to the Board of Directors for the National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns.

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## CHHS Grads Move Onward and Upward!

Recent GSU Master of Health Administration (MHA) graduate [Alena Katsnelson](#) has accepted the position of Guest Relations Manager / Operations Process Improvement Specialist at [Rush University Medical Center, Chicago](#).

As the Manager of Guest Relations, Katsnelson is responsible for providing a welcoming, high quality, and supportive hospital service experience for patients, families, visitors, and staff, as well as providing support for Guest Relations Associates.

Katsnelson is also working with representatives from the Support Services Division to provide performance improvement activities and to help meet organizational goals and objectives.

GSU Master of Health Science (MHS) in Addiction Studies graduate **Timaka Wallace** is now completing the Adult Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Program with an addiction focus at [Massachusetts General Hospital School of Nursing](#) in Boston. Admission to the program was extremely competitive; out of 1,015 applicants, only 96 students were accepted.

Most recently, Wallace was named a Sub-Saharan Scholar. In May she will accompany Nursing Professor Inge Corless, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, to the village of Swaziland in South Africa to gain international nursing experience with villagers who are infected with HIV/AIDS. Wallace is one of only six students chosen from a field of 50+ to participate in this experience.

Wallace, the first college graduate in her family, has come a long way from a youth spent in Chicago's South Side Ida B. Wells housing projects.

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## DPT Students Contribute to Success of Fitness Fair



*(Pictured above right, second-year Doctor of Physical Therapy student Daniel Stelk works with a Fitness Fair participant on her balance. In photo at left, Gabrielle Zifkin-Swett, second-year Doctor of Physical Therapy student, performs a balance and coordination exercise with a Fitness Fair participant. (Photos courtesy of Michael Gallagher.)*

A number of GSU Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) students and faculty members provided volunteer services for more than 200 students and family members at a **Family Fitness Fair** involving four Homer Glen grade schools (grades K through 4) last

fall. The event was hosted by a local registered dietitian and a four-member group of Homer Glen physical therapists.

In addition to recognizing National Physical Therapy Month, the fair was intended to raise awareness of childhood obesity and the importance of educating children on healthy lifestyles, per First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" initiative.

A total of 16 GSU Doctor of Physical Therapy students volunteered for this event, including: **Holly Ditzler, Takara Ebbin, Katie Guimon; Drew Henneberg; Megan Kosek; Brianna Lynch; Andrea Myles, Molly Noonan, Jenny Pate, Rose Porod, Kimi Robaczewski, Amanda Schlitt, Zachary Smith, Francesca Stanfa; Daniel Stelk;** and **Gabrielle Zifkin-Swett.**

Members of the Department of Physical Therapy who participated in the event include **Antonia Christian**, PT, MS, Instructor and Co-Director of Clinical Education; **Dale Schuit**, PT, Ph.D., MS, Associate Professor; and **Robin Washington**, PT, Ph.D., CRC, Assistant Professor.

Held in the Homer Junior High School gymnasium, the event featured four fitness stations where youngsters could complete five tests in four key areas: balance, coordination, strength, and flexibility.

"GSU was well-represented and much appreciated," noted **Phyllis Levine**, PT, DPT, owner of Functional Therapy and Rehabilitation, PC, in Homer Glen. Levine also serves on the Advisory Board for the Department of Physical Therapy.

"The physical therapy students did a great job. They were knowledgeable and enthusiastic — a good combination. We have had several comments from participants who said the university presence made them feel like it was a really important event," Levine said.

Fitness Fair organizers hope the data they collected at this event will be helpful in establishing fitness levels that can be used in year-to-year comparisons among K through 4th graders across the Homer Glen school district.

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## DrOT Students Display Impressive Range of Knowledge at Research Day

An impressive array of research agenda was on display last fall when seven students in the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (DrOT) program participated in the first annual DrOT Research Day. The students presented results from research that they personally conducted as a part of their final capstone project, which they are required to complete prior to graduation. The event was coordinated by [Divya Sood, OTD, OTR/L](#), Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy, with assistance from fellow faculty.

In her opening remarks, [Melanie T. Ellexson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA](#), Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy, noted that GSU's DrOT program is unique because it allows students to "follow their own passion" by pursuing their own area of interest.

"Our students have anywhere from two to 25 years of experience in the field already," Ellexson explained. "Some work in the acute care hospital environment; some in long term care. Many work in the public school system. But the important thing is our mission is being met: we're seeing our students doing very well in their areas of practice."

The research topics presented during the four-hour event included:

- *Participation in Play in Children with Sensory Processing Dysfunction: Enabled by Caregiver Self-Initiated Solution-Finding Skills:* Caren Schranz, DrOT, OTR/L, University Lecturer in the Department of Occupational Therapy.
- *Development and Validation of the Child Mealtime Participation*

- Checklist:* Elizabeth Wanka, MOT, OTR/L
- *Exploring Parents' Use of Strategies to Promote Play Participating in Children with Developmental Delays:* Lauren Gronowski, MOT, OTR/L
  - *Development, Validation, and Implementation of the Online Coaching Program for Teachers:* LaTonya Easley, MOT, OTR/L
  - *Active Class Participation of Students in the Master of Occupational Therapy Program:* Cynthia Carr, MS, OTR/L, Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy
  - *Coaching Model for Aging Individuals to Facilitate Their Participation Within the Home Environment:* LaShanda Gayle, MOT, OTR/L
  - *Exploring Leisure Satisfaction with the Use of the Nintendo Wii in an Older Adult Population with Chronic Diseases:* Steven Hansen, MOT, OTR/L (Pictured, above right)



A poster session followed the presentations. (In photo at right, DrOT student Steven Hansen, MOT, OTR/L)

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## Social Work Students Host Benefit for Local Youth Programs

Members of Phi Alpha, the Social Work Honors Society at GSU, sponsored a roller skating party at the Glenwood Roller Rink that was attended by more than 100 people and earned more than \$550 for youth programs.

[Maristela Zell, Ph.D., LCSW](#), Associate Professor of Social Work, serves as faculty sponsor of the Social Work Honor Society.

A report on the benefit appeared in the [SouthtownStar/Sun-Times Newspapers](#).

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*(Editor's Note: Hantack Happenings is a continuing feature of the E-Pulse newsletter, highlighting the activities and achievements of the College of Health and Human Services' Grants Office.)*

On your way to campus, some of you may have noticed the white frame house near the red barn across the street from Tony Tasset's sculpture, *Paul*. Originally the home of a family named Hantack, this building has housed the [College of Health and Human Services' \(CHHS\) Grants Office](#) since 2007. The Hantack House is the center of activity for two of the College's Health and Human Services' grant projects:

- [Health Care Jobs for Chicago Southland \(HCJ\)](#), funded by the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration
- [Building Capacity in Health Disparities Research \(HDR\)](#), funded by NIH's National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

The purpose of the first grant is to put unemployed, dislocated, and underemployed individuals to work by providing training and establishing career ladders in the health professions. The purpose of the second grant is to build research infrastructure within CHHS.

## Health Care Jobs for Chicago Southland

During this quarter, the Health Care Jobs for Chicago Southland (HCJ) program continued training and mentoring services for 49 nursing students. The program also graduated its first class of LPN candidates after completion of the 15-month course; additional support is being offered students who are studying for their licensing board exams. Some of the partners have begun offering tutoring and remedial services to participants so that they can pass their prerequisites.

The YWCA staff disseminated information at several community events. The program's job developer has found employment for an additional three dozen new hires. Southland Health Careers currently has 91 applicants enrolled and has issued 186 training certificates to date. Fifty-eight of their applicants have found employment in various providers throughout the community. Proactive Community Services has continued to recruit candidates and provide job readiness training.

In other activities, program staff attended a number of local job fairs, community events, and Southland Chamber of Commerce meetings. The GSU program staff has developed Supportive Service, Tuition Assistance, and Scholarship programs to assist financially-stressed applicants. The program plans to add leveraged transportation services for the applicants.

In addition, there are currently nine children enrolled in the [Family Development Center](#) who are receiving world-class daycare services funded entirely through the HCJ program.

The HCJ program was recently highlighted as a promising practice at a nationwide Department of Labor Conference in Washington D.C., with information on the program published in *Promising Practices Abstracts* by the Technical Assistance Partnership for the American Reinvest and Recovery Act High Growth and Emerging Industries grant programs. HCJ staff members were praised for providing a continuum of participant support, including basic education, career readiness training, community partnerships, and comprehensive, continuous employer engagement.

## Building Capacity in Health Disparities Research

The HDR project was granted an additional, no-cost extension year that extends grant activities to July 31, 2012. For the remainder of the project and using unspent grant monies, grant staff will be organizing additional research workshops, completing remaining deliverables, and winding down the project.

In order to sustain the advances the college has made in its pursuit of research, HDR staff has created a **Research Toolbox** that is accessible to faculty and staff via a portal within Datatel, the university's new Enterprise Resource Planning system.

The purpose of the toolbox is to provide "one-stop shopping" for a wide variety of resources related to conducting research, running the gamut from lists of grant opportunities and grant-making organizations to proposal development tools, information on secondary data sets, and publishing information. Among its many features are sample documents, budget tools, and links to data-rich and comprehensive research-related websites. A User's Guide for the Research Toolbox is available at the following link: [CHHS Research Toolbox User's Guide](#).

One core in the grant — Community Engagement and Outreach — continues efforts to build relationships that will reduce health disparities and provide health care access to vulnerable populations. Most recently, participating as a member of the Crossroads Coalition, the core worked with a task force on implementation of the Health Insurance Exchanges under the Affordable Care Act. Working with a group of agents and brokers, the Coalition has helped to define the new role of Navigator, efforts that have been shared with architects of the [Illinois Health Insurance Exchange](#). This role is critical to assuring culturally and linguistically appropriate health information and access to public and private options in the future.

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## Social Work to Host Information Sessions

The [Department of Social Work](#) will sponsor an Information Session for its **Master of Social Work (MSW)** degree program on the following date at Governors State University:

- Thursday, February 23, 2012 7:30 - 9 p.m. B1200 - Engbretson Hall  
Reservations are not required. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Kelly Robinson at 708.235.3997, or via e-mail at [krobinson@govst.edu](mailto:krobinson@govst.edu).

The Department of Social Work also will sponsor Information Sessions for its **Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)** degree program at Triton College on the following dates:

- Monday, March 5 5:30 - 7 p.m. Triton College, River Grove
- Monday, April 2 5:30 - 7 p.m. Triton College, River Grove

All information sessions will be held in **Building A - Library Lower Level Room A105** at Triton College, 2000 Fifth Avenue, River Grove, IL.

Program representatives will be present. Attendees are encouraged to bring official or unofficial copies of transcripts.

For more information, call 708.534.4086, or e-mail [janderson-muniz@govst.edu](mailto:janderson-muniz@govst.edu). Additional program information may be obtained at [www.govst.edu/chhs/bsw](http://www.govst.edu/chhs/bsw).

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College of Health and Human Services, 1 University Parkway  
University Park, Illinois 60484-0975  
708.534.3196 | [www.govst.edu/chhs](http://www.govst.edu/chhs) | [m-brady@govst.edu](mailto:m-brady@govst.edu)