

# CSWE Gero-Ed Forum



## 2006 SUMMARY

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Gero-Ed Forum, formerly NGSWC, was held in Chicago, IL from February 16 - 19, 2006. This year was a very successful year for the Forum, and as in years past, the Forum made available to its attendees innovative, high quality and timely sessions and events. New sessions and events included a Film Festival, Feature Film event, tour of the Alzheimer's Association offices and student poster awards. Additionally, the 2nd Annual Kick-Off, was given a larger venue so that it could encompass a keynote speaker, entertainment and a large crowd.

The Gero-Ed Forum was pleased to welcome over 235 presenters from 99 social work education programs, seven community organizations and representing four countries – more programs and organizations than ever before! Sessions included 30 oral and 12 special sessions; 3 mini-workshops; a roundtable, student poster and regular poster session; and the screening of 13 videos at 7 Film Festival sessions, including the Feature Film screening. We also saw a significant increase in student participation from 25 (2005) to 39 (2006) submitted student poster abstracts. The increase is probably attributable to increased marketing of the student poster session. Authors did not learn of the new Rosen Awards until after submission of their abstract, but it is expected that we will see a continued increase in student abstracts as a result of this generous award from Dr. Anita Rosen.

We were especially pleased with the special sessions, which featured cross-cutting topics presented by key leaders in aging and social work. Topics included alcoholism, mental health, civic engagement, infusion, disability and health disparities. This format brought a lot of attention to the Gero-Ed Forum, and the special sessions were very well-attended.

The Gero-Ed Center events began on the pre-conference day of February 16 with a successful Gero-Ed Institute, led by Drs. Judith Gonyea and Andrew Scharlach. About 40 conference attendees participated in this Institute on "*Economic and Health Disparities Across the Life Course: Implications for Aging, Policies and Programs.*"

The Gero-Ed Forum sessions began on February 17 after a very well-attended Kick-Off event. The Kick-Off featured, for the first time, a keynote address and entertainment. Dr. Elizabeth Clark, Executive Director of NASW, presented her keynote address "*Old, Poor and Vulnerable: The Other Side of the Baby Boom*" to a room of approximately 230 attendees. The event began and ended with an intergenerational dance troupe Perceptual Motion, which features performers ranging in age from their 20s to their 80s. Registrants praised this event throughout the conference.

The Gero-Ed Forum Film Festival began along with the regular sessions after the Kick-Off. The Festival ran for a half-day on Friday, all day Saturday and a half-day on Sunday. We were very pleased to have a total of 162 people participate over the course of this inaugural festival (not including attendance at the Feature Film event). The Festival culminated in a Feature Film event

Saturday evening where approximately 50 people turned out to preview the documentary *Almost Home* which aired on PBS the week following our screening. The film was followed by a panel discussion which included the film's producer and various persons featured in the documentary.

For the fourth year in a row, the tradition of partnering with the Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work (AGE-SW) for a roundtable session and reception was continued. In consonance with the APM theme, *Social Justice through Social Reform*, the roundtable facilitators focused on creating "A Social Work Agenda for Research, Teaching, Policy, and Practice: Social Justice and the Older Adult." Over 120 participants attended the roundtables, and the discussions from each roundtable are summarized and posted on the Web sites of both the Gero-Ed Center and AGE-SW. At the AGE-SW business meeting and awards reception, the new Anita Rosen Gerontology Awards for Outstanding Student Poster were given to the winners from the MSW and Doctoral category: Stephanie Herbers, a Saint Louis University MSW/MPH student, and Jeungkun Kim, a University of Wisconsin-Madison Doctoral student. No BSW student posters were submitted, but we will continue to encourage BSW student participation for the 2007 APM conference.