The next five years will be crucial for our Faculty. Our objective is to become one of the world's pre-eminent schools of social work, so that we can continue leading the way on a global scale through social work education, research and practice.

Over the past one hundred years, our students and faculty have engaged with society's most pressing issues. We know that our ability to solve large societal problems will depend on our capacity to develop innovative new ideas and transform them into practical solutions. We intend to realize the full potential of our established strengths as a builder of groundbreaking knowledge that is accessible and relevant, as an educational innovator and as a champion for the most vulnerable in our society.

We will be moving forward with an Academic Plan designed to keep us on the cutting edge of education, research, policy and practice. “Towards a Better Society” lays out the goals, priorities and strategic directions we want to pursue.

This plan is the result of a highly consultative and fruitful process. Discussions were held with professors, staff, sessional instructors, alumni, community partners, field instructors, students and regulatory bodies. The input we received was invaluable in illuminating our vision for the future of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.

It is a vision that we want all the friends and alumni of the Faculty to share. A vision that will enable us to confront the major challenges of our time, as we work towards changing the world's pre-eminent schools of social work, so that we can continue leading the way on a global scale through social work education, research and practice.

The next five years will be crucial for our Faculty. Our objective is to become one of the world's pre-eminent schools of social work, so that we can continue leading the way on a global scale through social work education, research and practice.

Over the past one hundred years, our students and faculty have engaged with society's most pressing issues. We know that our ability to solve large societal problems will depend on our capacity to develop innovative new ideas and transform them into practical solutions. We intend to realize the full potential of our established strengths as a builder of groundbreaking knowledge that is accessible and relevant, as an educational innovator and as a champion for the most vulnerable in our society.

We will be moving forward with an Academic Plan designed to keep us on the cutting edge of education, research, policy and practice. “Towards a Better Society” lays out the goals, priorities and strategic directions we want to pursue.

This plan is the result of a highly consultative and fruitful process. Discussions were held with professors, staff, sessional instructors, alumni, community partners, field instructors, students and regulatory bodies. The input we received was invaluable in illuminating our vision for the future of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.

It is a vision that we want all the friends and alumni of the Faculty to share. A vision that will enable us to confront the major challenges of our time, as we work towards changing the world's pre-eminent schools of social work, so that we can continue leading the way on a global scale through social work education, research and practice.

The next five years will be crucial for our Faculty. Our objective is to become one of the world's pre-eminent schools of social work, so that we can continue leading the way on a global scale through social work education, research and practice.

Over the past one hundred years, our students and faculty have engaged with society's most pressing issues. We know that our ability to solve large societal problems will depend on our capacity to develop innovative new ideas and transform them into practical solutions. We intend to realize the full potential of our established strengths as a builder of groundbreaking knowledge that is accessible and relevant, as an educational innovator and as a champion for the most vulnerable in our society.

We will be moving forward with an Academic Plan designed to keep us on the cutting edge of education, research, policy and practice. “Towards a Better Society” lays out the goals, priorities and strategic directions we want to pursue.

This plan is the result of a highly consultative and fruitful process. Discussions were held with professors, staff, sessional instructors, alumni, community partners, field instructors, students and regulatory bodies. The input we received was invaluable in illuminating our vision for the future of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.

It is a vision that we want all the friends and alumni of the Faculty to share. A vision that will enable us to confront the major challenges of our time, as we work towards changing the world's pre-eminent schools of social work, so that we can continue leading the way on a global scale through social work education, research and practice.
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Innovative ideas then have a much greater chance of moving directly into society, where they can touch lives and influence policy and practice. We want to make sure that this happens by creating a centre that will act as a bridge between groups and a first stop for community and government organizations with research needs.

That’s why we want to create a Knowledge Mobilization Centre at the Faculty. This will spark new collaborations and galvanize the sharing of knowledge, best practices, bright ideas and creative approaches for the greatest and most immediate impact.

WE WANT TO PROMOTE WELLBEING AND EQUITY ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE.

From the moment we first open our eyes, what we see, who we meet and what we experience has a lifelong influence. So many things affect who we are – on the individual and family level, as well as on the social, cultural, economic and societal level.

Facets such as the way we live and work and the kind of health services we use – all of these profoundly affect wellbeing. We know, for example, that people living in poverty are disproportionately affected by poor health and that the health of Canadian newcomers often begins to deteriorate several years after arrival.

Through our Faculty’s close links to community and connections to neuroscience, social policy and public health, we are learning about the complex interplay of factors affecting people throughout the lifespan. As social workers, we need to understand how a multitude of factors – genetic, biological and environmental – interact and influence people at every phase of life, from infancy through childhood, adolescence, early and middle adulthood and older adulthood.

That’s why we plan to take the lead in building innovative learning environments for the training and assessment of students.

WE WANT TO THINK GLOBALLY AND ACT LOCALLY.

We have a strong commitment to look for creative solutions to social problems at the local, national and international level. Many of our research projects are interdisciplinary and involve international communities and universities.

Building new and meaningful connections is an ongoing priority. So is bringing together researchers, students and social service organizations from around the globe to exchange ideas and share best practices.

We are dedicated to leading the way within the broader social work communities around the world, to collaborating with diverse partners to address social inequities and to acting as a leader in strong international collaborations.

And that’s why our plan is to promote social work education and research that connects local issues with national and global challenges.

Do you want to find out more about our plans for the future?

There are many more ideas in the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work Academic Plan. Learn all about our strategic directions for the next five years. Read “Towards a Better Society” on the Faculty website.
Eyes Wide Open

“Now I’m making decisions with my eyes wide open,” says Sheryl Ederman, one of the first six students to graduate with an Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration. All six completed the course in one year, while working full time.

Ederman is a manager at Jewish Family and Child with thirty years experience in practice and management, who realized she needed more formal administration education in areas where she was self-taught.

“I always let others do the business side,” Ederman says. “This course trains social workers to have a broader vision. I learned how to read and understand financial documents. Now I hold my own at management tables and make informed decisions.”

Designed as an Executive MBA for social workers, this post-master’s program gives experienced social service professionals the business skills they need to operate effectively as managers. It is intended to be accessible to candidates working full time.

“It has certain unique features,” says program director Wes Shera, professor and Dean Emeritus of the Faculty. “Classes are offered as modules, one full day per month. A core text is used in all courses and there are integrating themes: client-centred care, diversity and evidence-informed practice. Students love the experiential learning.”

“You pick assignments that are relevant to you and that brings your learning to life,” says Ederman. “My learning went to a whole other level because I assessed work programs in my schoolwork. Assignments were supported by my agency. I’d gather research information naturally every day at work. My fellow students had many years of social work experience. That made conversations and feedback incredibly helpful because it was higher level thinking and planning. Now I make decisions with increased understanding and we’re implementing several programs based on my coursework.”

Fellow graduate Janet Gasparelli manages three programs at Toronto’s Native Men’s Residence, which provides shelter programs for Aboriginal men. “If I’d take an issue I had at work,” says Gasparelli, “use it in an assignment and receive feedback from professors and guest speakers who were professionals in the field. Then I’d hand it over to my supervisor at work. We are now making changes to our program evaluation based on my coursework. This is extremely exciting because we are changing the culture of an organization.”

“This program brings your work to life,” says Ederman. “It will benefit newer social workers as well as more seasoned ones. Because it was so direct and relevant, it stretched my brain and enhanced my problem-solving.”

“A course like this,” says Gasparelli, “is extremely important because we need more social workers as directors and managers of professions. You don’t want the people who are making decisions to consider only dollars and cents. Social workers have such good interpersonal skills. We can make a real impact on work environments.”

Visit us online
Keep up to date on Factor-Inwentash news and events.
www.socialwork.utoronto.ca.

Donate Today
and help make a difference in the life of a social work student.
www.socialwork.utoronto.ca/alumni/makesadifference.htm

Towards 2014!
Join the FIFSW in celebrating 100 years of excellence in social work education, practice and research.

Towards 2014!
Join the FIFSW in celebrating 100 years of excellence in social work education, practice and research.

“Now I’m making decisions with my eyes wide open,” says Sheryl Ederman, one of the first six students to graduate with an Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration. All six completed the course in one year, while working full time.

Ederman is a manager at Jewish Family and Child with thirty years experience in practice and management, who realized she needed more formal administration education in areas where she was self-taught.

“I always let others do the business side,” Ederman says. “This course trains social workers to have a broader vision. I learned how to read and understand financial documents. Now I hold my own at management tables and make informed decisions.”

Designed as an Executive MBA for social workers, this post-master’s program gives experienced social service professionals the business skills they need to operate effectively as managers. It is intended to be accessible to candidates working full time.

“It has certain unique features,” says program director Wes Shera, professor and Dean Emeritus of the Faculty. “Classes are offered as modules, one full day per month. A core text is used in all courses and there are integrating themes: client-centred care, diversity and evidence-informed practice. Students love the experiential learning.”

“You pick assignments that are relevant to you and that brings your learning to life,” says Ederman. “My learning went to a whole other level because I assessed work programs in my schoolwork. Assignments were supported by my agency. I’d gather research information naturally every day at work. My fellow students had many years of social work experience. That made conversations and feedback incredibly helpful because it was higher level thinking and planning. Now I make decisions with increased understanding and we’re implementing several programs based on my coursework.”

Fellow graduate Janet Gasparelli manages three programs at Toronto’s Native Men’s Residence, which provides shelter programs for Aboriginal men. “If I’d take an issue I had at work,” says Gasparelli, “use it in an assignment and receive feedback from professors and guest speakers who were professionals in the field. Then I’d hand it over to my supervisor at work. We are now making changes to our program evaluation based on my coursework. This is extremely exciting because we are changing the culture of an organization.”

“This program brings your work to life,” says Ederman. “It will benefit newer social workers as well as more seasoned ones. Because it was so direct and relevant, it stretched my brain and enhanced my problem-solving.”

“A course like this,” says Gasparelli, “is extremely important because we need more social workers as directors and managers of professions. You don’t want the people who are making decisions to consider only dollars and cents. Social workers have such good interpersonal skills. We can make a real impact on work environments.”
“The warmest gratitude comes from needs answered, shared and dreams encouraged. My daughter and I and sincerely grateful for your kind donation. Thank you.”

A special note of thanks straight from the heart of a FIFSW scholarship recipient.

“I was the first graduate of the Collaborative MSW/Asia-Pacific Studies program and now I work with newcomer families at South Riverdale Community Health Centre. The scholarship I received as a student was a great beginning to my career. It was a tremendous help to meet donors doing important work in their communities. I’ve continued to build upon the connections I made through it. It gave me peace of mind and helped me to become an ambassador for social work in my community. Because it was written up in Chinese newspapers, suddenly people were asking me what social workers did. It became a conversation starter, especially because many people in the community are not familiar with the help social workers provide. Most of all, strong seeds of friendship were sowed. Scholarships are good both for the student and the community.”

SHERLYN HU (COLLABORATIVE MSW/ASIA-PACIFIC STUDIES)

“The China Project was launched by a contribution from a donor in 1997 as a collaboration between the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and China to develop social work practice, education and research that addresses the unique challenges faced by the Chinese people. When the project began, China had less than two dozen social work education programs. Today, there are over 300 social work programs and more than one million practitioners carrying out functions that would be considered as social work in the west. We are now working in China with Chinese social workers as well as in Canada to develop better social services for Chinese Canadians. None of this would have been possible without contributions from donors.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR A. KA TAT TSANG, DIRECTOR, THE CHINA PROJECT AND FACTOR-INWENTASH CHAIR IN SOCIAL WORK IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

“I was working towards a PhD in 19th century English literature at York University before I decided to enter the field of social work. I’ve always had a strong commitment to change. I volunteered for several years with the Toronto’s Rape Crisis Centre – Multicultural Women Against Rape and helped develop a young women’s mentorship program at Scarborough Women’s Centre during my practicum last year. This year, I’ve been fortunate enough to work as a therapist at CAMH’s Eating Disorders and Addiction Clinic. I wouldn’t be at the Faculty without the scholarship I received which was particularly validating because it was merit-based. Receiving a scholarship allowed me to provide the best possible care to my practicum clients, while concentrating on my schoolwork. I believe social workers have a tremendous amount to offer. It’s their compassion and unique perspective that make it such a compelling profession for me.”

RESHMA DHRODA, 2ND YEAR MSW STUDENT
problems are humbled you.”

“We are seeing an unprecedented global aging trend, as increasing numbers of baby boomers reach age 65. This population faces major challenges, making it absolutely crucial that we get reputable information on aging out to the people who need it now. Because the Faculty received a bequest from an alumna to support research on retirement, we have been able to develop pocket-size educational tools on retirement issues from a social work perspective. They have been prepared by an interdisciplinary team of researchers from the National Institute for the Care of the Elderly (NICE), a massive international network of people involved in researching and working in aging. We are getting knowledge into the hands of professionals who work with the elderly, older people themselves and those who are approaching retirement and that means we are empowering people in the later years of their lives.”

PROFESSOR LYNN McDOUGALD, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR LIFE COURSE AND AGING, DIRECTOR, NATIONWIDE INITIATIVE FOR THE CARE OF THE ELDERLY (NICE)

RESEARCH PROGRAM

THE SCHOLARSHIP
GAVE ME PEACE OF MIND

“I graduated in 2010 from the Faculty and now I’m an assistant professor at the Lyle Hallman Faculty of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University. Because my scholarship was awarded to an outstanding student for research in mental health, it made me realize that my research was being recognized by the community. That was extremely validating and encouraging. Receiving a scholarship also meant that I didn’t have to go begging for money when conducting my research. My thesis focused on the experience, in the community, of individuals of ethno-racial minority backgrounds with serious mental illness. The scholarship gave me peace of mind and the freedom to concentrate on what was important: the extensive interviews I held with participants, physicians and family members. It gave me time to listen to their stories.”

MAGNUS MPDAGO-M’CARTHY (PhD), ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

OUR RESEARCH INITIATIVE ON CYBER RISK AND BULLYING WAS MADE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF FUNDING FROM BELL CANADA

“At a time when we were still recognizing the momentous implications of the Internet as a new communication tool for young people which has tremendous benefits and at the same time is a potential site for abuse and victimization, I received funding from Bell Canada to investigate cyber risk. Phenomena such as cyber bullying were not yet in the public eye and research was sparse. Since then, research on cyber risk and cyber bullying has burgeoned. Receiving support to collect preliminary data when so little was known about the nature and impact of online risks such as bullying and about the exploding cyber world was extremely important. This research, which has led to subsequent studies, is increasing our understanding of cyber risk and will inform education and intervention programs designed to prevent and intervene with these new forms of victimization.”

PROFESSOR FAYE MISHNA, DEAN AND THE MARGARET AND WALLACE MCCAIN FAMILY CHAIR IN CHILD AND FAMILY

To all who give so generously of your time and money, we are sincerely grateful.

LYNN FACTOR AND SHELDON INVENTASH WITH PROUD FACTOR-INVENTASH SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS.

Because of funding to support research, we are empowering people in the later years of their lives.
The world is in desperate need of research that advances social wellbeing. Our Faculty plays an important role by conducting research that is ahead of its time.

This research is only possible because of a range of grants from prestigious agencies like the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Canadian Institute of Health Research and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, among others, as well as contributions received from private individuals and corporations.

Receiving such grants speaks to the importance of the ideas that are being generated.
The University of Toronto is one of the world’s great incubators of ideas and solutions. As Canada’s leading research university, it is uniquely positioned to play a pivotal role in building models for successful societies.

The world is looking for answers. All across this University, researchers are opening up new vistas for social purpose and human expression. The Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work is an essential part of that endeavour. Our researchers are providing the world with powerful insights that will help to shape the human condition.

Research by our five newest faculty members is deepening our understanding and exploring new avenues of thought. This is research with a goal. Research that is working towards a better society.

“Community Building Starts with Grassroots Thinking”

“All across Toronto, there are young people doing fabulous work in their communities,” says Tarak Ahmed, a CITY Leaders graduate who is now a 1st year MSW student at the Faculty. “CITY Leaders brings them together. I grew up in Regent Park where I’m heavily involved. I know the community well but I don’t know anywhere else. I was isolated in my own bubble. CITY Leaders made me realize that there are so many ways to get involved in this city.”

The Creative Institute for Young Leaders (CITY Leaders) offers a new and inspiring approach to leadership development. This unique program promotes civic engagement by providing the practical knowledge and tools that Toronto’s youth need to become effective community leaders. Graduates receive a leadership certificate from United Way Toronto and the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work. The program was launched in 2008 and there are now more than 100 CITY Leaders. A number of graduates, like Ahmed, have gone on to the Faculty’s MSW program.

Applicants are chosen from young people who either work or actively volunteer in community-based organizations and movements across the city. Ahmed, for example, ran a soccer club which brought neighbourhood youth together. After completing a required number of modules over eight months, graduates have the skills, tools – and a formidable network – to support their social advocacy. Participants learn about subjects such as conflict resolution, negotiation, fundraising and creative leadership. They benefit from being matched with mentors and implement group projects that directly address city-wide issues in creative ways.

“The learning works because it is applied and relevant,” says Wes Shera, professor and Dean Emeritus of the Faculty, who is the Faculty liaison. “CITY Leaders motivates people to learn more, do more and be more. A lot of young people are doing grassroots work without any recognition, often as volunteers. This program provides a tremendous sense of validation.”

Ahmed says that the mentorship relationship he has with “Professor Wes” will last long after he graduates from the MSW program. “CITY Leaders changed my life,” he says. “What I’m doing now, studying for my MSW, the people I’ve met and the things that I’ve done, none of this would have happened without it. Our city is in great need of more young leaders who are active and vigilant in their communities and a program like this makes an enormous difference in people’s lives.”

Call For Nominations

We are looking to fill these positions on the Alumni Board, for a two year term, beginning June 2012:

• Treasurer
• Second Vice President
• Secretary

If you hold a degree, graduate diploma or certificate from the Faculty, you can make a nomination or be nominated. Request a nomination form by contacting the Alumni Office at alumni.fsw@utoronto.ca or 416-978-4437.

To be included on the official slate of nominees, nomination forms must be received in hard copy at the Alumni Office by 5 pm, April 30th. You can also nominate someone in person at the Annual Meeting, as long as you have the nominee’s written consent. Nomination forms should be sent to: Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work Alumni Association 248 Bloor Street West Toronto, ON M5S 1V4

Attention: Nominating Committee
Much of Dawson’s job involves responding to problems. Because of the techniques and skills he’s learned, he initiates solution-building conversations that lead to collaborative decision-making. “It used to be,” he says, “people would come to me with their problems and I’d tell them what to do. Very often, it wasn’t what they wanted to hear. Now, I ask them what they want instead. Once we determine that, I ask what they need in order to get there and we discuss strategies. They come up with the solutions and I spend my time celebrating successes, not stressing about what’s wrong.”

“This kind of coaching moves away from problem-focused interventions,” says program director Haesun Moon. “Away from the belief that diagnosing a problem will provide a solution. Instead, you look at what’s already working, what’s wanted and what’s possible. And usually it is enough to get their eyes shining with hope again.”

The cutting edge program is attracting professionals from the corporate and nonprofit sector, as well as from social work and the health sector. Because Solution Focused Coaching is organized around participatory modules, participants learn by practicing essential skills in different contexts.

A New Vision for HIV Research

Informed consent by participants is an integral part of any ethical research activity. That consent is particularly essential when it comes to testing new forms of HIV prevention among clinical trial participants from the poorest populations in the world.

For the last ten years, professor Peter A. Newman’s research has focused on pushing forward the idea that we can’t sustain HIV clinical trials without meaningfully engaging trial participants and local communities. An HIV vaccine is a global health priority, among the top United Nations Millennium Development goals: 2.7 million people were newly infected with HIV (7,400 each day) and 1.8 million died in 2010 alone.

Now Newman’s team is part of an extraordinary global collaboration of researchers working together to develop an intervention that will help communities and individuals to make informed decisions about participating. Newman’s team is part of an extraordinary global collaboration of researchers working together to accelerate the development of safe, effective and accessible HIV vaccines. “The idea,” says Newman, “is to create something new and exciting. This collaboration is a truly co-ordinated approach that brings together social and biomedical researchers and clinical trial specialists from around the world for one common goal.”

“Our study focuses on communities in South Africa and India,” says Newman, the Canada Research Chair in Health and Social Justice at the Faculty, “two countries with the most people living with HIV in the world, where people do not have access to the treatments and prevention that we have. In South Africa, we’re working with young people, straight and gay, who are poor and mainly black. In India, we are working with gay men and other men who have sex with men. These are among the populations for whom an HIV vaccine is most sorely needed.”

The Canadian arm of Newman’s research, including assistant professor Shelley Craig, his post-doctoral fellow Carmen Logie (PhD 2011) and doctoral student Sophia Fantus, will focus on training providers and new investigators, including graduate students. A project of this magnitude and scope requires an enormous administrative side. To support the project’s administration, the Faculty matched funding provided by the U of T provost’s major research management fund.

Newman has also received new funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research for an additional project. The first of its kind in the developing world, his Thailand-based study will engage communities most at risk of HIV in designing and developing new prevention technologies that are tailored to their needs.

Newman’s research – in South Africa, India, Thailand and Canada – addresses one of the most urgent global issues of our time. It is a major step forward in the international research now being conducted at the Faculty and reflects one of the key directions articulated in the Faculty’s new Academic Plan.