In January 2011, the Institute on Social Exclusion (ISE) at the Adler School of Professional Psychology began an 18-month Mental Health Impact Assessment (MHIA) to address important mental health issues in Chicago’s Englewood community. Englewood is a low income, African-American community located on the city’s southwest side. The community suffers from many of the social determinants of poor mental health — unemployment, crime, violence, poor housing, and lack of services.

The MHIA constitutes an effort to advance Health Impact Assessment (HIA) practice by integrating mental health considerations. Like standard HIAs, it involves the steps of screening, scoping, assessment, recommendations, reporting, and monitoring & evaluation.

To select our MHIA project, we screened more than 60 potential national, state, and local public policies – e.g., proposed amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act, proposals to raise the minimum wage in the State of Illinois, and suggested amendments to municipal ordinances concerning how the city should address the growing number of foreclosed and vacant buildings in Chicago. After months of careful consideration, we chose the EEOC’s Policy Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest Records in Employment Decisions [No. 915.061 (9/7/90)]. It is our intention to use the results of assessment of the EEOC Policy Guidance to inform Illinois state law on the same issue.

The principle question under investigation in the MHIA is the following: What is the impact on the mental health of a community when employers use arrest records in making employment decisions about members of that community? This question places a “mental health lens” on areas of law that have, to date, only been based upon civil rights, human rights, or economic analyses. Thus, the MHIA provides new information and a new frame — i.e., mental health impacts – by which to determined whether or not the proposal should be implemented or not. Since the answer to the principal research question would become especially important if the EEOC amends the above-referenced Policy Guidance, Lynn C. Todman, Ph.D., ISE Executive Director, offered public comment to the Commission on this very important issue in a letter dated August 4, 2011.

She pointed out that the prospects of amending and increasing enforcement of this Policy Guidance has support in Englewood and other similarly situated communities. Additionally, she noted that, although the ISE’s MHIA had then only scoped the parameters of the MHIA, initial and preliminary observations suggest that, when arrest records, especially those that led to no charge or conviction, are used in employment decisions, population mental health may be adversely impacted.

The use of arrests in employment decisions limits opportunities for employment, and sets individuals on a path toward poverty and social exclusion, predisposing them to a wide range of mental health problems. Similarly, the collective employment status of a community’s residents determines neighborhood...
conditions (a social determinant) which, in turn, impacts mental health outcomes. For instance, high rates of unemployment have deleterious impacts on “social capital”, “psychological sense of community” and, as a consequence, on the collective mental health and well-being of communities which may manifest high rates of mental health services utilization, substance abuse, depression/anxiety, and family violence.

Even when employers do not wrongly apply the current EEOC guidance, this policy may produce adverse unintended effects on marginalized populations. Believing that it is lawful for employers to inquire about arrest records, members of legally protected minority groups may forego applying for available jobs because they are under the false impression that employers are well within their rights to inquiry about arrest records and are unlikely to hire someone with an arrest record – even if that arrest did not result in a charge or conviction. In this way, the current policy, as understood by potential job seekers, may well have a “chilling” effect among people who most are in need of employment and its benefits (e.g., health insurance).

At this time, the scoping phase of the MHIA project has been completed. During this phase, the ISE team formulated a series of research questions to guide the assessment process; identified health impacts to be considered; research methodologies; data sources; the demographic, geographical and temporal boundaries for impact analysis; and developed a work plan to guide the assessment process. Presently, we are engaged in the early portion of the assessment phase, collecting data from focus groups, community surveys, and interviews. That data will be used to determine the mental health implications of the proposed revision to the aforementioned EEOC Policy guidance. The results of the assessment will be used to develop the MHIA recommendations regarding the proposed policy revision and will be reported out to various stakeholder interests including Englewood residents, public officials, legislators and others.

The MHIA project has been funded, in part, by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. As described elsewhere in this newsletter, additional funding has recently been awarded by the Pierce Family Foundation.

**IN THE NEWS**

**Expert Testifies on Mental Health Dangers of Vacant Houses**

On Wednesday, July 20, 2011, Dr. Lynn Todman, Executive Director of the Adler School’s Institute on Social Exclusion (ISE), testified before the Chicago City Council Joint Committee on Housing and Real Estate and Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards which was examining proposed changes to the city’s Vacant Buildings Ordinance. Dr. Todman, a trained urban planner and a member of the city’s Community Development Commission, spoke in support of Amendment of Chapter 13-12 of Municipal Code concerning maintenance and security of vacant foreclosed housing in Chicago. Proposed amendment would require designate banks as owners of the properties their foreclose on and increase fees for registering vacant properties with the city’s and fines for non-compliance to requirements to pays fees and to maintain and secure their foreclosed properties.

Dr. Todman was interviewed by WBBM Radio Chicago regarding her testimony. She explained that the ISE had conducted an assessment of the likely effects of the proposed ordinance change on the mental health of the residents of the Englewood community. The City Council passed the amendment into law on July 28. Most recently, in October the Council weakened the legislation under pressure from the banks.

Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice (IPSSJ) Initiatives

The Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice (IPSSJ) promotes social justice and public safety by increasing civic engagement and community control of safety issues. The IPSSJ uses socially responsible research, education, and community engagement to strengthen communities, systems, and the practices of institutions responsible for education and rehabilitation. There are many exciting initiatives at the IPSSJ, including the Restorative Justice Comparative Study, The Year of the Immigrant Series, and ACHS Program Summary and Evaluation.

Restorative Justice Comparative Study

The IPSSJ is collaborating with the Adler School Vancouver campus in a comparative study of Restorative Justice (RJ) practices in Chicago and Vancouver, B.C. Political discourse in the U.S. is dominated by themes of fiscal austerity, and yet the 2010 budget for the Illinois Department of Corrections was $1.22 billion and the recidivism rate for the state is over 50%. Mass incarceration is both costly and largely ineffective in truly rehabilitating offenders, yet tough on crime approaches and big spending on incarceration are deeply ingrained in our political and judicial systems. Restorative Justice (RJ) is a philosophy of practice that seeks to repair the harm done by an offense through processes such as peace circles and conflict mediation, which often take place in community-based settings rather than corrections. Restorative practices offer a potential alternative to costly corrections spending, and have been shown to be more effective in reducing recidivism and increasing victim satisfaction for some offenses. Research on the effectiveness of individual programs using restorative practice has been promising, yet such practices are far from mainstream in the U.S. Meanwhile, restorative practices are more commonly used by justice systems in some Canadian provinces, providing an opportunity to learn from a comparative case study of Chicago and Vancouver, B.C. Over the next 6 months, the IPSSJ will be exploring how restorative practices differ in the two cities. The project seeks to inventory the various restorative practices happening in each city, and better understand how different programs interact with each other and formal justice system. The study seeks to better understand the complexities of implementing successful restorative programs within two unique cities, justice systems, and political cultures. The project will culminate in the spring with a bi-campus presentation and dialogue about restorative practices and justice system reforms in both countries.

The Year of the Immigrant Upcoming Events

This year the Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice is launching a series to educate and mobilize the Adler School community around the issue of immigration. This series is called the Year of the Immigrant. The first presentation in this series, “The Mental Health Implications of Being an Undocumented Student,” takes place Tuesday, November 1st from 3:30-5:00 p.m. in Community Hall on the Adler School campus. We will invite mental health professionals and community workers that are experts in immigration policy to come address this issue. The event is open to the public. There will be an Adler Action Day in conjunction with this effort that will offer the opportunity to write letters about the federal DREAM Act to our Illinois Senators Mark Kirk and Dick Durbin.

The second event will take place Thursday, December 8th from 3:30-5:00 pm. It is an opportunity to learn about mass deportation in the Chicagoland area and the effect it is having on families. Currently there are approximately 80,500 children in or around Chicago that have had at least one parent deported in the last five years. This trend in deporting massive numbers of individuals, the majority of whom possess no criminal record, is having a profound effect on families, communities, schools, and detention facilities. Please join us for these two important dates in the Year of the Immigrant Series.

St. Leonard’s Ministries/ACHS Program Summary & Evaluation

There is a sign as you enter the Washington D.C. airport that says “Welcome to the United States: Home to 5% of the world population, and 25% of the world’s prisoners.” There is no doubt that the United States has incarcerated more people in the last thirty years that are now either cycling through the prison system over and over again, or whom are destined to search for non-existent employment while they try to rebuild their lives in the face of stigma and legislation that makes it difficult to work and move beyond prison.
The Adler Community Health Services (ACHS) has been providing services to men and women getting out of prison for a number of years within a halfway house setting. ACHS serves the men and women living at St. Leonard’s House and Grace House on Chicago’s Westside. These mental health services are key in aiding individuals leaving prison to rebuild their lives and their sense of hope, future, and family.

This year the Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice (IPSSJ) will be summarizing and evaluating the work of ACHS for those living at St. Leonard’s and Grace House. It is hoped that this summary will provide a deeper understanding of the ways in which formerly incarcerated individuals need additional support and care to successfully avoid recidivism, and build the skills necessary to reintegrate into society.

More specifically, the current endeavor is a full program review of all of the psychological services provided to St. Leonard’s House by ACHS. Currently, an evaluation is being designed to track key indicators of program effect. This will allow ACHS to redesign the program as necessary, and to manualize both program and corresponding training. This goal is to develop a full understanding of successful program elements that can be replicated by other agencies and halfway houses that serve the mental health needs of the formerly incarcerated.

The ISE Hosts William T. Bielby, Expert Witness in the Wal-Mart Case at Supreme Court

By Rachel Eddy, Adler School Student

The Adler School was proud to host William T. Bielby, Ph.D., on September 21, 2011. Dr. Bielby was an expert witness in the highly controversial Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. v. Dukes lawsuit, which was one of the most publicized employment discrimination cases to date. Did Wal-Mart, the nation’s largest retailer and private employer, discriminate against women? Dr. Bielby believed Wal-Mart’s policies led to inevitable gender bias used by managers to be subjective in their pay and promotion decisions, which were generally made in favor of their male employees.

The class-action lawsuit involved six female plaintiffs, who argued that Wal-Mart’s corporate culture invited managers to “act on their own worst instincts,” thereby treating women unfairly on compensation, promotions, and job assignments. Women comprise more than 65 percent of hourly employees throughout the Wal-Mart organization, yet only 34.5 percent of managers are women. It has also been noted that it takes women on average 4.38 years to rise to a management position, while it takes men only 2.86 years to gain similar managerial positions. In order to better illustrate the clear gender bias issues presented in this case, the plaintiffs enlisted the support of Dr. Bielby, who aided in their prosecution of the case.

Dr. Bielby is a professor of Sociology at the University of Illinois Chicago and specializes in social framework analysis. Social framework analysis is structured around the stereotypes and biases that people naturally, albeit unconsciously, hold—people have the tendency to act on their own unconscious stereotypes and biases whenever they are given the opportunity to do so, with no regard for the potential consequences to themselves or others. Dr. Bielby applied the concept of social framework analysis to the Wal-Mart lawsuit, focusing on gender bias, stereotypes, and the structure and dynamic of gender inequality in major organizations such as Wal-Mart.

Dr. Bielby concluded that, by having a centralized personnel policy and permitting subjective decisions to be made by field managers, Wal-Mart allowed stereotypes to greatly influence personnel choices. Therefore decisions made regarding pay or promotion became highly vulnerable to gender bias. Although discrimination and intentional bias in the workplace is illegal and socially unacceptable, it continues to have an influence on decisions made within the workforce.

Ultimately, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Wal-Mart’s favor, stating that there was too much variance in the plaintiffs’ circumstances to constitute a class. Although the plaintiffs’ position was not victorious, the question of hidden bias remains. How can we prevent our own stereotypes and biases from infecting our everyday decisions? Is any company truly immune to unconscious bias? These are questions that the courts will probably have to address on other days.

Bielby’s talk September 21 was hosted by the Institute on Social Exclusion and Women Employed, Inc.
Reflecting on the Englewood Youth Gun Violence Prevention Program – Summer 2011

By Lariza Fenner, Adler School Core Faculty

As new core faculty in the Art Therapy department at the Adler School of Professional Psychology, there could not have been a better orientation to the school’s dynamic mission and vision than contributing to the Englewood Youth Gun Violence Prevention Program. This was one of my first job assignments within one month of coming on board at the Adler School.

Being a new collaborator to the summer program, I relied heavily on past experiences regarding program specifics, art material selection, and goal formation. The knowledge gathered helped shape my vision of the program but it was just my vision. The nature of this year’s summer program required that the vision be shared among many contributing community agencies, funders, and the Adler School Institutes. With the phenomenal leadership of Lynn Todman and Elena Quintana, executive directors of the Institutes, I was excited to get onboard. These two women embodied a focus so close to the needs of the communities that they served that it inspired me to learn new approaches to serving the public.

On so many levels, care was taken to deliver a program that honored the collective vision of lasting social change and the endeavor also honored various pedagogies and methodologies. The goal of the summer program is to educate Englewood community youth about the effects of gun violence and assist them in changing existing structures that perpetuate violence. We all knew where we wanted to go, but how we got there was still up for discussion. Collectively we had to figure out how to piece diverse elements of the program together – such as pre/post surveys, guest speakers, community organizations, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, youth activist organizations, Flip cameras, archived role plays, active journaling, art projects, documentary films, drumming, martial arts, agency & advocacy, PTSD, and cultural & individual identity. The goal was to create a cohesive program that spoke to the youth of Englewood.

We knew that spouting out truths about social change was not enough to create an impact. We needed the youth to participate by processing art they created. This conversation was facilitated by students, faculty, and program staff. Ultimately, a consistent structure was agreed upon that took into account the value of community voice.

Through a brief presentation and didactic segment, group art activities, active journaling, role plays, and opening/closing circle, we were able to initiate relevant dialogue about the nature of violent and aggressive discourse in the Englewood community. These youth have witnessed violent acts, therefore, when it came to “acting” out the role plays, in was all too easy for them to depict the provided scenarios. An additional example of their awareness became evident through a walking photo tour of the neighborhood. The images portrayed the banality of pollution and abandoned buildings.

When the youth asked what they could do to improve the beautification of the community, the youth decided to compose a letter that was sent to six local aldermen. By the program’s closing ceremony, one of the community’s aldermen returned a letter that recognized the youth for their initiative, and set forth a plan for dealing with the issue. For me, it was powerful to see the bridge between art and social action. As for the program, I was truly impacted by the use of multi-modal, multi-disciplinary and collaborative approaches. I enjoyed the continued exchange among my colleagues and look forward to partnering with them in the future.
Meet the ISE Research Associates

Tiffany McDowell has joined the Institute on Social Exclusion as a Research Associate. Tiffany’s primary role is to support the development and implementation of the research component the Mental Health Impact Assessment that the ISE is currently conducting on a proposed amendment to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s Policy Guidance on the use of arrest records in employment decisions. Tiffany is particularly interested in building the capacity of community organizations and residents to advocate for policy change.

Previously, Tiffany served as Assistant Director for Research & Programs at the Center for Closing the Health Gap in Greater Cincinnati, where she developed and evaluated community health interventions to reduce disparities in obesity. Much of her work centered on empowering residents to develop strategies to maximize the effectiveness of community health programs. Tiffany managed a resident-led neighborhood health assessment that resulted in 14 policy recommendations for improving access to healthy foods in the city of Cincinnati. Tiffany is also a licensed marriage and family therapist, and has worked specifically with issues surrounding HIV/AIDS, incarceration, and other disenfranchised client groups.

Tiffany holds a PhD from The Ohio State University in Human Development and Family Science, specializing in couple and family therapy. She received a MS in Child and Family Studies from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio and a BS in Psychology from Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Tiffany’s interest and background in using systems theory to guide the development of community-based interventions for improved health outcomes will be very useful in her current role with the ISE.

Mark Driscoll graduated from Marquette University in 2011 with a Ph.D. in clinical psychology. He joins the ISE to assist in the development and implementation of the Mental Health Impact Assessment tool.

Broadly, Dr. Driscoll’s primary research interests focus on how culturally-based behavioral, cognitive, affective, and interpersonal processes influence mental health among individuals of ethnic minority backgrounds. His work incorporates a stress-and-coping framework to better understand how individual trait characteristics and competencies interact with contextual and situational factors to influence depression and psychological distress.


ISE Student Research Affiliates

There are a number of opportunities available at the Institute on Social Exclusion. Students may work on ongoing research, education, and outreach initiatives. They are exposed to a myriad of activities such as program development, community organizing, grant writing, and advocacy. For example, students are presently involved supporting the Mental Health Impact Assessment, the Social Exclusion Simulation and the Englewood Youth Gun Violence Prevention Program. Biographical information about some of the student research affiliates follow.

Jared Berger is a doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. He received his Honors BS in Psychology from York University in Toronto, Canada. He holds a MA in Counseling and Organizational Psychology, and a Certificate in Group Psychotherapy. Over his four years of involvement with the ISE, Jared has served as a Mental Health Impact Assessment Committee Member, Managing Editor of the Intersections Newsletter, Projects and Research Assistant, and Social Exclusion Simulation Presenter. He was also a contributing author for the Social Determinants...
of Mental Health conference proceedings book, and an article in a peer-reviewed journal. Moreover, Jared is presently a therapy extern at Rush-Copley Medical Center where he works with patients diagnosed with acute and chronic mental illness. His research and clinical interests include the identification and examination of cognitive vulnerability and protective factors for psychopathology, particularly anxiety disorders.

Kate Brereton is a doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She holds a BA in Psychology from the University of Colorado. Kate is a member of the Institute on Social Exclusion Simulation team. Kate is presently on her advanced externship where she provides therapy to homeless women and their children with the goal to empower them to become independent, productive, and responsible members of their community.

Adriana Brodyn is a third-year doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BA in Psychology and a minor in Film and Media Studies from Colgate University. Drawing from her strong research background, Adriana contributes to the Institute as a Research Assistant and Data Analyst. Recently, she analyzed data collected as a part of the Social Exclusion Simulation and authored an article which has been submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. Adriana’s research interests include gender variant and transgendered embodiments, cultural development among sexual subcultures, and identity development and sociolinguistics.

Neli Cohen is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program, with a concentration in Neuropsychology, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She graduated Cum Laude with a BS in Psychology from the University of Houston. Neli also holds an associate degree in Management, with an emphasis on Financial and Bank Management, from University of National and World Economy in Bulgaria. She is an active member of the Institute’s Social Exclusion Simulation team, a role-play exercise designed to identify the structural origins of social disadvantage. In the past, Neli has served as a Community Service Advocate at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago where she worked with the policy department on local, state, and federal issues affecting with people with HIV and assisting on policy advocacy projects.

Brittany Coleman is a student in the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology, concentrating in forensic psychology, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BA in Psychology from Southeastern University. She is a member of the Institute’s Mental Health Impact Assessment research and outreach committees. In the past Brittany has been involved in several community projects. Most recently, she assisted in fundraising for a cystic fibrosis benefit concern. She is also a member of PSI CHI Honor Society, the international Honor Society in Psychology.

Margaret Cornell is a doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She holds a BA in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As a member of the ISE’s Mental Health Impact Assessment Committee, Margaret engaged in a systematic literature review that identified relevant social determinant of mental health indicators and assessment tools. Margaret is presently an advanced therapy extern at Kennedy-King College Wellness Center where she provides therapeutic services to predominately low-income African American students.

Christina DeSuno is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She earned her BA in Psychology from Goddard College. She is presently pursuing her Certificate in Alcohol and Drug Counseling (CADC). Christina is a member of the Institute’s Social Exclusion Simulation team. She is presenting providing individual and group therapy for individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia, depression, and substance abuse issues. In the past, Christina volunteered at Cities of Service: One Good Deed Chicago, where she researched and developed trainings for non-profit partners regarding best practices associated with volunteer recruitment and retention.

Rachel Eddy is a second-year student in the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology, concentrating in forensic psychology, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She holds a BA in Psychology from Kalamazoo College, Michigan. Rachel is also certified and a trainer in Psychological First Aid. Her current practicum works with homeless individuals who have been diagnosed with substance abuse or chronic mental illness. Previously, Rachel completed her community service practicum at Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers (CLAIM), where she worked to improve the rights for currently and previously incarcerated
women. Rachel supports the Institute as a Research Assistant and Blogger by showcasing to the external community relevant research findings and applications.

Jill Fay is a doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She holds a BA in Psychology, with a minor in Women’s Gender and Health Studies, from the University of Michigan. As a member of the ISE’s Mental Health Impact Assessment Committee, Jill completed literature reviews on public policy in Illinois and its impact on mental health. In particular, she identified specific pathways through which various social determinants in areas of low socio-economic status lead to particular community mental health outcomes. Her clinical and research interests include understanding the psychological and traumatic effects victims of sexual assault experience, and ways to promote optimal well-being.

Nicholas Fredrick is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. He holds a BS in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin–Parkside. He is a member of the Institute’s Mental Health Impact Assessment research and outreach committees. He is presently on his advanced therapy practicum at Adler Community Health Services where he provides individual and group therapy to individuals at an adult transitional center. Nicholas has also provided therapy services at Englewood Behavioral Health Services, and diagnostic services at Tinley Park Mental Health Center.

Andrea Goddard is a first-year doctoral student, with a concentration in family and marriage studies, in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She graduated with a BS in Business Administration from the University of Connecticut. She is a member of the Institute’s Mental Health Impact Assessment research and outreach committees. She is fluent in both English and Spanish. She served for two years in the United States Peace Corps in Panama. Andrea has also participated in a research program focusing on the role of mentor relationships among urban, low-income Latino adolescents.

Lauren Hricisak is a doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She graduated with a MA in Clinical Psychology, specializing in counseling, from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She holds a BA in Professional Writing from Carlow University in Pittsburgh. Lauren is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of Illinois. As a member of the ISE’s Mental Health Impact Assessment Committee, Lauren organizes information related to poverty, urbanization, and the community-wide effects of systemic barriers on mental health. Presently, Lauren is also on advanced practicum at Hartgrove Hospital where she provides individual, group, and family therapy to children, adolescents and adults with mood, psychotic, personality, and developmental disorders.

Jasmine Jones is a third-year doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program, with concentrations in Children and Adolescent and Traumatic Stress, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She holds a BS in Psychology from Northeastern University in Boston. Jasmine is an active member of the Institute’s Mental Health Impact Assessment research and outreach committees. Jasmine is presently a therapy extern at Our Children’s Homestead, an adoption and foster care agency, devoted to working with youth with mental health concerns. Her clinical and research interests include working with inner city children and adolescents to cultivate resilience after overcoming traumatic experiences.

Tammy Ma is a second-year doctoral student, concentrating in neuropsychology, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She graduated with a BA in Psychology from California State Polytechnic University. She is fluent in both English and Mandarin. Tammy is an active member of the Institute on Social Exclusion Simulation team. She is presently on her diagnostic externship at Adler Community Health Services where she provides comprehensive assessments to individuals at a forensic and medical setting. In the past, Tammy has been involved with a research project in the Back of the Yards Community where she worked with community stakeholders on creating mental health interventions for youth.

Josh Rinker is a second-year doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program, with concentrations in Traumatic Stress, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. He holds a BA in Psychology from Metropolitan State College of Denver. Josh is a member of the Institute’s Mental Health Impact Assessment research and outreach committees. In the past, Josh has provided outreach to youth and adults living on the street through the Night’s Ministry. His primary area of clinical interest is working with first responders in the aftermath of potentially traumatic events.
Gerard Widmann is a second-year doctoral student, concentrating in neuropsychology, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. He graduated with a BA in Psychology with a concentration in human development from DePaul University. Drawing from his strong technology background, Gerard contributes to the Institute as a Research Assistant and Database Analyst responsible for managing listings and communique. Gerard presently serves as the Communications Chair at the Illinois Psychological Association of Graduate Students (IPAGS). His clinical interests include personality and mood disorder, dementia, aphasia, and clinical psychopharmacology.

Stacey Willard is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She holds a MA in Counseling and Art Therapy. She received her BA in Studio Art from Olivet College in Michigan. Over her three years of involvement with ISE, Stacey has served as a Policy and Research Assistant, and Social Exclusion Simulation Presenter. Stacey is chiefly responsible for the manualization of the Institute’s Social Exclusion Simulation, a tool designed to educate adult-learners about social exclusion in American society. In the past, Stacey has worked with at-risk youth and clients diagnosed with anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, conduct, and personality disorders.

Dhiya Shah is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She holds an Honors BA in Psychology, with a minor in Sociology, from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dhiya is an active member of the Institute’s Social Exclusion Simulation team, a role-play exercise designed to identify the structural origins of social disadvantage. Moreover, she is the secretary for both the PSI CHI Honor Society and Doctoral Students Exploring Private Practice at the Adler School of Professional Psychology.

Erin Watson is a doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology program, with a concentration in Primary Care, at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She received her BS in Psychology from the College of Charleston, and her MA in Clinical Counseling Psychology from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Erin supports the research and education initiatives of the Institute. Recently, she instituted a comprehensive archival system to catalogue and organize the directory of existing publications, media briefs, and events brochures. Erin is presently a Health Psychology Extern at the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center. Her clinical and research interests include understanding methods for integrating primary care for patients with mental health concerns, and advocating for the improvement of health disparities.

Social Exclusion Simulation team, a role-play exercise designed to identify the structural origins of social disadvantage. Moreover, she is the secretary for both the PSI CHI Honor Society and Doctoral Students Exploring Private Practice at the Adler School of Professional Psychology.

DEFINING TERMS: Social Determinants of Mental Health

The Adler School’s Institute on Social Exclusion has crafted a working definition of the social determinants of mental health that is in accord with the position of the World Health Organization’s [WHO] Commission on Social Determinants of Health.

The WHO described the social determinants of health as the conditions in which people “are born, grow, live, work and age” and which “are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels” (WHO, 2009). These conditions are influenced by policy choices and are primarily responsible for disparities in health, according to the WHO.

Social determinants of mental health — those elements of social structure shown to affect health and illness, include at a minimum:

- Income Inequality
- Food Security
- Housing Quality
- Social Status
- Neighborhood Conditions
- Employment Opportunity
- Discrimination
- Cultural Norms
- Social Exclusion
- Political Marginalization
- Physical Isolation
- Public Service Systems

The social determinants framework has been widely applied to physical health conditions such as heart disease, cancer, and obesity. However, mental health applications have been far fewer. The work of the ISE sets out to address the disparate treatment of mental health – as compared to physical health – in the social determinants framework.
September 2011

- Sept 14: IPSSJ presents a primer on “Issues in Immigration” at the Adler School in collaboration with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
- Sept 21: ISE hosts William T. Bielby, expert witness in the Wal-Mart case before Supreme Court
- Sept 26–27: IPSSJ in Vancouver to launch the International Restorative Justice Research Collaborative

October 2011

- Oct 18: Lynn Todman is a panelist at the HIA of the Americas 2011 Workshop addressing “New Topics in HIA: Mental Health” in Oakland, California
- Oct 24: Lynn Todman presents at the “10th Annual Council of Advisors to Reduce Recidivism through Employment (CARRE) Conference - New Directions in Advocacy” on “Mental Health Impact Assessment”
- Oct 27: ISE hosts Social Exclusion Simulation

November 2011

- Nov 1: IPSSJ hosts an Adler Action Day for Comprehensive Immigration Reform
- Nov 1: IPSSJ hosts “The Mental Health Implications of Being an Undocumented Student,” a panel presentation
- Nov 7: ISE hosts Social Exclusion Simulation
- Nov 16: ISE hosts Social Exclusion Simulation
- Nov 18: Lynn Todman presents at the Chicago HOPES Conference, discussing social issues effecting homeless students
- Nov 19: Lynn Todman discusses children’s mental health and resiliency through health policy initiatives at the National Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health Annual Conference in Washington, DC

For information about our events and to RSVP, contact us at:
Adler Institute on Social Exclusion (ISE) – ise@adler.edu
Adler Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice (IPSSJ) – ipssj@adler.edu

Pierce Family Foundation Awards Grant to Adler School for ISE’s Mental Health Impact Assessment Project

The Adler School of Professional Psychology has been awarded a $10,000 grant from the Pierce Family Foundation to support the School’s Institute on Social Exclusion and its pioneering Mental Health Impact Assessment (MHIA) project, developed to improve the mental health and well-being of people in vulnerable communities.

The Foundation provided its support based on the ISE’s ongoing MHIA project launched in January, as well as its MHIA work in fall 2010 examining how amendments to Chicago’s vacant property ordinance would affect community mental health in the city’s Englewood neighborhood.

Through the current MHIA launched in January, the ISE is examining the use of arrest records in employment decisions—regardless of whether the arrest leads to a conviction—and the far-reaching ramifications of that practice for low-income, especially minority, communities such as Englewood.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is revising its policy guidance on the use of arrest records in employment decisions, arguing that such use may violate Title VII of the Civil Rights Act especially when those records are used to disproportionately eliminate minority job applicants and are not relevant to the applicants’ ability to perform specific jobs. Currently, employers often ask job applicants about arrest records, effectively depressing employment in many minority communities.

Policymakers must understand the mental health implications of their policy decisions not only in employment, but also in transportation, education and a range of other “non-health” policy domains—especially in a context of shrinking funding for mental health, said Lynn Todman, Ph.D, executive director of the Institute on Social Exclusion and leader of the MHIA Project.

As an advancement of current Health Impact Assessment (HIA) practice, the MHIA is intended to help policy makers ensure that their decisions support population mental health and promote mental health equity.

“We are honored that the Pierce Family Foundation has chosen to support our work as a transformative practice that will improve the lives of people who live in vulnerable communities,” Todman said.
About the Adler School Institute on Social Exclusion

The mission of the Adler School Institute on Social Exclusion (ISE) is to advance social justice. We do this by working to integrate the concept of “social exclusion” into U.S. popular and public policy discourse; by helping to contextualize social disadvantage; and by advancing the idea that the point of intervention for addressing social disadvantage is its social, political, and economic context.

The work of the ISE has been made possible through generous support of:

- The American Psychological Association
- The Field Foundation of Illinois
- JCCC Foundation
- The W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- The Kresge Foundation
- The Pierce Family Foundation
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- The Spencer Foundation
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, SAMHSA
- U.S. Department of Justice

For more information about the ISE, email ISE@adler.edu.

About the Adler School Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice

The mission of the Adler School Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice (IPSSJ) is to promote socially just policies and practices within law enforcement and homeland security through research, education and community outreach. The IPSSJ aims to build safer, healthier communities by recognizing that safety is a fundamental component of health – both individual health and community health – and striving to assist communities in cultivating resources that alleviate public safety concerns and lead to overall community health.

For more information about the IPSSJ, email IPSSJ@adler.edu.