Letter from the Editor

In the study of women and work, we at CWW have found that we cannot avoid talking about care. It is overwhelmingly women who perform unpaid caring labor in families—taking care of children, preparing meals, and nursing family members when they are ill. And paid care occupations—nursing, teaching, child care, elder care, social work, etc.—are jobs that are largely dominated by women. At CWW, scholars are involved in research that addresses many different angles of the intersections of care and work. We have been active in care-related policy issues at the state level—and have taken a lead role in examining care needs on our very own campus. Read on to hear more about how the theme of care is linked to a wide range of CWW’s projects and initiatives.

Mignon Duffy
Guest Editor of Newsletter
Meg Bond
CWW Director

Public Forums Forward Massachusetts Care Policy Network

In November of 2007, CWW hosted a gathering of about 15 scholars from around Massachusetts who study care. The goal in convening this high-powered group was to put our heads together to figure out ways to bring the considerable body of care scholarship to bear on policy in the state and beyond.

Two of the goals that emerged from that meeting of the newly christened Massachusetts Care Policy Network (MCPN) were (1) to generate a research report that described the care sector in the Commonwealth; and (2) to create a website that could be used as a resource by researchers and advocates to connect with scholarship as well as keep up to date on current care-related policy issues.

The “Counting on Care” report is the result of the first goal, framing the care sector as a unique part of the Massachusetts economy and documenting its impact. We held a number of public forums around the state—in Lowell, in Boston, in Springfield, and in Salem—to use the report as a catalyst for discussion among academics and advocates. We have also created a website (www.countingcare.org) for the report, and in the next year we hope to expand this website to become more of the resource hub that the network participants envisioned.

Members of the MCPN have continued to communicate and meet, and we are exploring next steps both in terms of research and in terms of continuing the provocative conversations that were begun at the “Counting on Care” forums. CWW remains an important institutional home base for the network, so stay tuned!

Report Documents Importance of Care Sector in Massachusetts

CWW Faculty Associate Mignon Duffy joined researchers Randy Albelda (U Mass Boston) and Nancy Folbre (U Mass Amherst) to take a close look at the care sector in Massachusetts. The report, “Counting on Care Work: Human Infrastructure in Massachusetts,” calls for identifying the care sector—education and care of children, health care, and daily care of those who need some help because of illness, age, or disability—as a critically important segment of economic activity.

Duffy and her colleagues measured the overall impact of care in the Commonwealth by combining three analyses: 1) a measure of homes and families; 2) an examination of the large and growing number of paid care workers; and 3) an analysis of the state budget’s contribution to the care sector.

The findings highlight the significance of the care sector:

• Paid care work accounts for over one-fifth of the state’s paid labor force;
• Residents of Massachusetts perform 24.9 million hours a day of unpaid care work—the equivalent of 3.1 million full time workers;
• Women account for 75 percent of paid care workers and provide 64 percent of unpaid care; and
• State and local governments spent $24 billion in 2007 on the care sector.

This project was funded by the Creative Economy Initiative of President’s Office of the University of Massachusetts and grew out of the Massachusetts Care Policy Network, a CWW-sponsored initiative to convene scholars from around the state interested in bringing research to bear on policy around care issues. The full report is available at www.countingcare.org.
Healthy Diversity: Building Cultural Competence in Healthcare Organizations

Healthcare organizations often serve a broad range of cultural, ethnic and linguistic groups. In order to be fully culturally responsive in their care, these organizations need to recruit and support a diverse, multilingual workforce. This is easier said than done. And, although many studies address the “cultural competence” of individual clinicians, few have focused on specific ways to promote a more inclusive workforce. CWW received funding from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues to do just that.

The overall project goals are 1) to understand better the unique challenges that community health centers face in the respectful integration of staff members from communities of color and/or immigrants, while supporting them in the delivery of culturally relevant health care to diverse communities; and 2) to identify promising organizational policies and practices for addressing the challenges. To address these goals, CWW is partnering with the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers to survey all 52 Massachusetts centers. The research team will follow up with five centers, geographically distributed and in diverse communities, to explore issues in depth.

The project team includes Meg Bond (PI), Michelle Haynes and Robin Toof (Co-PIs), Lauren Hajjar (Project Manager) and Johana Reyes Quinteros (Research Assistant). A professional and academic Advisory Group is helping to guide the research. The project team is multi-disciplinary and represents community and social psychology, public administration, health education, public health, and nursing, among others. The ultimate goal is to distill broader policy implications from the findings and disseminate recommendations broadly.

SAVE THE DATE
for Women’s Works
Thursday Dec 2, 2010
and Gathering at the Well
Thursday April 7, 2011

Associates Study Care from Many Angles

One of the wonderful opportunities of working collaboratively with the broad range of scholars at CWW is to discover unique synergies in our work. Over the past several years, the theme of care has emerged persistently as an area of inquiry that runs through many of our projects. Below you will see examples of research—done by CWW Associates from various disciplines—that illuminate different angles of care.

Andrew Hostetler’s (Psychology) research addresses how discourses of individual choice and responsibility shape the aging experience. Through current community-based projects, he is exploring the needs and aspirations of seniors, with particular focus on developmental continuity, social integration, and intergenerational community, as they contend with the limits and contradictions of choice. Through the “Redefining Aging, Redefining Community” and “Lowell Seniors Count” projects, Hostetler is documenting matches and mismatches between seniors’ anticipated needs and existing care resources and opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Cheryl Najarian Souza (Sociology) is collecting data from male and female politicians about their experiences of work and family balance and how they negotiate making public policies. Through in-depth interviews and a content analysis of these politicians in the media, she explores how they articulate their work in public service and the care work they do in their own family lives. Cheryl also explores the connections between their own experiences of balancing work and family with how they create, manage, and implement public policies regarding issues of work and family.

Jana Sladkova (Psychology) is collecting data on the impact of immigration enforcement on immigrant families in Lowell. Her interviews with immigrants and service providers to the immigrant community focus on the impact on families of detention and/or deportation of family members due to their undocumented status. In her analysis Jana will explore how these detentions and deportations affect children who suddenly find themselves with one or both parents absent, asking questions such as: Do the children stay behind in the US when parents are deported? If so, who provides care for them? Do parents continue to provide care for them after deportation and if so how?

Jean L. Pyle (Economics) is researching ‘The Global Economic Crisis and the Migration of Asian Women: What Are the Issues?’ This work focuses mainly on women who move transnationally to perform caring labor, whether in domestic households or in institutions in the health care sector. Her multi-level analysis reveals that women’s economic and social problems intensify during economic downturns, often translating into problems for the well-being of women’s families and communities as well as impacting the development of their countries of origin.
12th Annual Gathering at the Well Highlights Contributions of Seniors

Often, as people age they are thought of more as needing care than as being vibrant contributors to work, care, and communities. This year’s CWW Forum turned that notion on its head, focusing on the ways in which older adults are engaged in paid work, volunteering, or family care. Not only do these seniors make critical contributions to communities—they are also healthier as well.

Two main speakers addressed the theme of the Forum, “Gray Hairs, Golden Opportunities: Older Women and Work that Matters.” Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes, director of the Sloan Center on Aging and Work at Boston College, spoke about her study “Engaged as We Age.” The study investigates the impact on mental and physical health of multiple engagements in life: continued work, volunteer activities, care giving, education and training.

In addition, Margaret Morganroth Gullette, a scholar at the Women’s Studies Research Center at Brandeis University, shared her observations on the unique perspective and poise of “midlife” women. Gullette is an essayist, cultural critic, activist and prize-winning writer of nonfiction.

The CWW Forum has an established tradition of exploring issues related to women and work in an interactive and inclusive way, and this year’s event was no exception. In addition to listening to the main speakers, participants also rewrote fairytales so that the downtrodden or despised women in the story had happier endings and “golden opportunities for work that matters.” And a panel of women from Lowell shared their own stories of remaining engaged as they age.

This year was also the first time that CWW awarded the Splash! award to women who have made a difference in their communities. The three recipients honored were:

- Lynne Brown-Zoune, executive director of Home Away From Home Adult Day Health Care, who has created the largest adult day health center in the Merrimack Valley, serving disabled adults and seniors.
- Rosanne DiStefano, executive director of Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley, who has spent three decades advocating on behalf of the needs of older adults and family caregivers.
- Frances (Fran) Peters (posthumously), who was a graduate of the Lowell Technical Institute in textile chemistry, and technical director of testing at the UMass Lowell Research Foundation.

The event was organized by a committee led by CWW Faculty Associates Andrew Hostetler (Psychology) and longtime CWW Affiliate Imogene Stulken (Protestant Campus Ministry). Funding for the forum was contributed by FOX Relocation Management Corp; Enterprise Bank; Trinity Emergency Medical Service; John Chemaly; the UMass Lowell College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; the Psychology Department; and the Office of Student Activities and Leadership.

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Associates Study Care from Many Angles

Katherine Rosa (Nursing) has recently published exploratory qualitative data from in-depth interviews with pregnant Cambodian-American women in the Journal of Advances in Nursing Science. The interviews focused on hearing each participant’s stories of important events and relationships from childhood to present day. Analysis of the data revealed participants’ patterns of health. Katherine’s work illuminates that an approach to nursing care that finds meaning in relationships with participants promotes health.

Laura Punnett (Work Environment) has been studying workplace health and safety hazards in the healthcare sector for over 10 years. She and her colleagues have documented the high physical and psychosocial demands on direct care workers, the socioeconomic gradient in workplace hazards within the healthcare workforce, and opportunities and obstacles to improving the work environment in the nursing home industry. The implications of health and safety hazards include long-term disability and expensive compensation claims, and high workforce turnover rates, all of which impact the availability of staff to meet the steadily increasing demands for care workers.

Mignon Duffy’s (Sociology) forthcoming book explores the history of paid care work in the United States. The book is entitled Intimate Labors: A History of Gender, Race and Paid Care in the United States, and will be published by Rutgers University Press. Intimate Labors draws on both quantitative and qualitative data to map the overlapping histories of domestic servants, doctors, nurses, teachers, child care workers, social workers, and other workers whose job it is to care for some of the most vulnerable members of our society.

Monica Galizzi’s (Economics) research focuses on the economic consequences of disabilities and occupational injuries. She is currently working with data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, which focuses on individual labor histories and also collects information about respondents’ households. As part of her study, Monica is investigating the effect that injuries have on the labor force participation and well-being of those family members who are involved in the care of injured workers.
Lily Ledbetter Visits UMass Lowell

Lily Ledbetter, the former Goodyear Employee whose case became the inspiration for the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009, visited UMass Lowell on March 31, 2010. In her speech to students, faculty and staff, she told her story and encouraged citizens to continue to fight for gender pay equity. Joining CWW to sponsor the event were UMass Lowell Gender Studies Program; Center for Family, Work, & Community; Departments of History, Political Science, Psychology, Regional Social & Economic Development, Sociology, and Work Environment; the Bread & Roses Heritage Committee; MTA/GRACE; Massachusetts Society of Professors; Merrimack Valley Central Labor Council; North Shore Labor Council, and United Teachers of Lowell.

Childcare at UMass Lowell

In keeping with our mission to promote institutional change as well as engage in policy-relevant scholarship, CWW has been working closely with several community-based organizations to better understand the child care needs of our own campus community and to explore creative approaches to meeting unmet needs.

Most recently, CWW collaborated with a consulting group at Lowell ACRE Family Day Care to survey UMass Lowell faculty, staff, and students about their child care needs. The 174 parents who responded to our survey have a total of 264 young children among them—roughly 20% (55) of the children are between 1 and 2 years old; 24% of the children (64) are between 3 and 5 years old. About half of the parents are UMass Lowell students; the other half are faculty, staff and administrators.

The childcare working group will use this information to propose childcare solutions for the campus community. If anyone is interested in joining the group, email the center at cww@uml.edu.