

Progress on the *Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative*

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Engagement: Social Challenges, Policy Practice, and Professional
Training of Social Workers*

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Background

- Island Wood Meeting (hosted by USC, UW, in Coordination with Brown School, U Chicago, AASWSW, and SSWR)
 - *Science of Social Work* discussion continued from SSWR presentation by John Brekke and convening in summer of 2011
 - Grand Challenges for SW discussion begun as a way to focus development of scientific impact
- Grand Challenges Roles
 - The American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (The Academy) would advance the *Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative* (GCI)
 - The Grand Challenges Executive Committee would direct the Initiative, itself, subject to AASWSW Board review

The Anticipated Impact

- Clarity About Problems
- Achievable Goals
- Integration of Efforts
- Innovative Scientific & Policy Approaches
- Widespread Impact on Society

Problem Identification

- First, is to bring social work's voice into the multi-disciplinary conversation on the definition of deeply significant problems. This involves characterizing the problems and issues facing society (e.g., in terms of social- vs. individual-level determinants), interpreting the context, and analyzing causes and consequences.)
 - Problem definition sets the stage for all the other elements: how the most pressing issues are defined dictates the types of solutions that are entertained, the kind of world we are able to visualize.
 - Essential to this step is determining the “grand context,” that is, demographic trends and other global conditions facing contemporary society.

Achievable Goals

- Second, is to frame a vision and achievable goals concerning the problems: what we would want the world to look like. This involves framing opportunities for human development, for a healthy society, and for reaching human potential. This step also entails taking stock of, and building on, the profession's "grand accomplishments."

Integration

- Third, is to integrate ourselves within a larger discourse and efforts concerning deeply significant problems.
 - Integration implies linkages on two levels, (a) vertically, for example, under that of the Office of the Surgeon General's *National Prevention Strategy*, or the United Nations *Millennium Development Goals*, and (b) horizontally, for instance, in collaboration with existing agendas and work taking place at the community levels and integrating MSW, PHD, and faculty efforts

Innovative Scientific & Policy Approaches

- Fourth, is to generate innovative scientific solutions, but also engage in policy development and other socio-political approaches to change.

Innovative Initiatives Going to Scale

- Fifth, is to advance innovative and sustainable initiatives that will have widespread impact as we take them to scale in society.

Significant Societal Impact

- Sixth, we strive to affect societal problems and to create significant societal impact. The assessment and evaluation of social work's efforts would be required. This assessment would include analysis of how social work's scientific pipeline was working.

Additional Expected Outcomes

- Engaging the public in better understanding and supporting the enterprise of social work and social welfare
 - Clarifying the criticality and capacity of our field
- Facilitating the collaboration of social work and allied disciplines in creating the scientific advancements needed to conquer the Grand Challenges
- Stimulating interest among potential applicants to educational programs and faculty and staff positions
- Transform curriculum at all levels
- Achieve sustainable changes in society at a reasonable scale for the challenges we undertake

Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative

Executive Committee

John Brekke and Rowena Fong (Co-Conveners)

Claudia Coulton

King Davis (Retired)

Diana DiNitto

Marilyn Flynn

Rowena Fong

J. David Hawkins

James Lubben

Ron Mandersheid

Yolanda Padilla

Michael Sherraden

Eddie Uehara

Karina Walters

James Herbert Williams

Staff: Sarah Butts, AASWSW and UM SSW

Definite GCSWI Products

- A process that is open and fair and offers a high probability of quickly achieving a compelling set of grand challenges
- A set of grand challenges that has supporting scholarship and meets established criteria:
 1. Challenge must be big, important, and compelling.
 2. Scientific evidence indicates that the challenge could be solved.
 3. Meaningful and measurable progress to address the challenge can be made in a decade.
 4. The challenge is likely to generate interdisciplinary or cross-sector collaboration.
 5. Solution to the challenge requires significant innovation.

GCSWI Products

- An appealing presentation of these challenges using social media and other strategies that will help to recruit new social work applicants and investors to our cause
- New website for the Academy to better host the Grand Challenges of Social Work Initiative (aaswsw.org) and mechanism for collection of GC ideas.



Meet the Fellows

Fellows of the Academy bring organizational leadership to the Grand Challenges Initiative and demonstrate excellence in the Social Work profession.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR BOARD & FELLOWS](#)



The American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (Academy) is an honorific society of distinguished scholars and practitioners dedicated to achieving excellence in the field of social work and social welfare...

[OUR MISSION](#)



Suggest a Grand Challenge

The AASWSW Grand Challenges Executive Committee seeks to identify approximately Twelve Grand Challenges facing Social Work that can be meaningfully changed in a decade of intensive collaborative work grounded in science and practice. We welcome your suggestions.

Keep in mind that a grand challenge must meet the following criteria:

- Challenge must be big, important, and compelling.
- Scientific evidence indicates that the challenge could be solved.
- Meaningful and measurable progress to address the challenge can be made in a decade.
- The challenge is likely to generate interdisciplinary or cross-sector collaboration.
- Solution to the challenge requires significant innovation.

[CLICK HERE TO ENTER A SUGGESTED GRAND CHALLENGE](#)



Academy Induction Ceremony Updates

November 10, 2012



Fellow Highlights



Richard P. Barth, PhD
President

Richard P. Barth is dean, School of Social Work, University of Maryland. He has also served as a chaired professor at UC Berkeley and University of North Carolina. [Learn More about Richard P. Barth](#)

New Fellow Information

Welcome our new fellow members. Click name below to view bios:

Fellow News

Meetings

Events

There currently are no available entries in this category.



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People say that we cannot eliminate hunger, HIV infection, the stigma of mental illness. We say we can.

“If we worked on the assumption that what is accepted as true really is true, then there would be little hope for advance”

~ Orville Wright



Grand Challenges Initiative

Suggest a Grand Challenge
Leadership

Grand Challenges Initiative

The AASWSW is excited to announce the **Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative**. The project seeks to engage the public in identifying ambitious yet achievable goals for society that mobilize the profession, capture the public's imagination, and require innovation and breakthroughs in science and practice to achieve. We welcome your ideas!

SUBMIT YOUR IDEAS FOR THE GRAND CHALLENGES

Please [click here](#) to enter a Grand Challenges Suggestion.

If you would like to learn more about the **Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative**, please review the following publications:

GCSWI Products

- Media presentation that captures some of our fields highlights and demonstrates our capacity.
- Documentation of how local university initiatives can use the Grand Challenges strategy and contribute to the success of the GCI
- Academy sponsored Written Products, Journal Articles, White Papers and other publications

GCSWI White Papers and Publications

Complete and Available on the Academy website:

- Grand Challenges for Social Work ***Impact Model***
- Journal of the Society for Social Work Research ***Grand Challenges for Social Work***, Published October, 2013
- ***Social is Fundamental: Introduction and Context for Grand Challenges for Social Work, Working Paper No. 1***
- ***Grand Accomplishments in Social Work, Working Paper No. 2***

Forthcoming papers:

- ***Identifying and Tackling Grand Challenges in Social Work***
- Research on Social Work Practice, ***Invited Article: The American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare: History and Grand Challenges***

Likely Strategies for Additional Input on Goals (TBD by GCSWI EC)

The Profession's Way

- *National Academy of Engineering's* approach (many meetings and much involvement of engineers on a regional basis)

The Expert's Way?

- *Gate's Foundation's* Grand Challenges for Global Health relied on an international group of luminaries
- *NIMH* Grand Challenges for Global Mental Health
 - Heavy reliance on Delphi Method

The GRAND Criteria

1. Challenge must be big, important, compelling.
2. Scientific evidence indicates that the challenge can be completely or largely solved.
3. Meaningful and measurable progress to address the challenge can be made in a decade.
4. The challenge is likely to generate interdisciplinary or cross sector collaboration.
5. Solution to the challenge requires significant innovation.

Domain(s) of Social Work Affected

- The Achievement Of Basic Needs (Food, Clothing And Shelter)
- Safety and Security
- Health
- Social Connectedness
- Human Potential

Final Grand Challenges Development and Selection

- Development of Grand Challenge Ideas and Call for Grand Challenge Concept Papers (May 2014)
- Linking similar challenges into more parsimonious and powerful challenges
- Identifying the few very best first challenges
 - Giving encouragement and help to develop them
- Looking for fit with grand accomplishments of social work and grand context of social work
- Considering the domains of social work affected
- REVIEW METHOD: Peer reviewed process based on Concept Paper

Development of Action Plans for Using the Grand Challenges

- Conferences (or Panels at Conference) on Grand Challenges?
- Special issues or sections of journal on the Grand Challenges Initiative?
- Special GCI grant announcements (need sponsoring funding partners)
- GCI policy briefs in support of GC's
- Social media support

GCI Vanguard Schools

- A few schools (USC, UW, UCB, at least) are starting their own Grand Challenges projects
 - These are already building a process that may be of use to the GCI
 - Some will have completed this process and have challenges articulated by spring or summer

Will the Grand Challenges be Another Fake Out that Only Lucy Can Love?



How Might it Differ From...

NASW Social Work Congress Imperatives for the Next Decade

- Assure excellence in aging knowledge, skills, and competencies at all levels of social work education, practice, and research
- Participate in politics and policy where major decisions are being made about behavioral health
- Assure a qualified social work labor force to serve children
- Take the lead in advocating for quality universal healthcare
- Elevate the public's awareness of the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of social work practice in health care
- Address the impact of racism, other forms of oppression, social injustice, and other human rights violations through social work education and practice.

How Might it Differ From...

CSWE's Setting Priorities, Serving the Nation: A Shared Agenda for Social Work Education 2012 (2 sections and 8 recommendations featured)

Section 1: Investing in Social Work

1. Invest in the social work profession and social work education to ensure the profession is able to meet the needs of vulnerable populations.
2. Incorporate social work into activities and initiatives across the federal government to promote and advance interprofessional education, training and practice.
3. Support the appointment of social workers to positions throughout the federal government and seek inclusion of social workers, educators, and researchers on federal advisory bodies.

Section 2: Building Social Work Capacity Through Education and Training

4. Fully fund health professions training programs, including programs authorized in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
5. Implement the recommendations made in the Institute of Medicine report, "The Mental Health and Substance Use Workforce for Older Adults: In Whose Hands?"
6. Support and enhance the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Minority Fellowship Program
7. Fund the Health Professionals Educational Assistance Scholarship Program at the Department of Veterans Affairs.
8. Enact the Health Equity and Accountability Act to fill in health care equity gaps and build a culturally competent workforce.

What's the GCSWI Difference?



1. Not about resources for the profession, per se
 - Not explicitly about increasing our voice or our piece of the pie
2. About **what we can do for society** not what society can do for us
3. Rests on social work's ability to generate great ideas and to partner (not going it alone)

What's the GCSWI Difference?



4. Based on scientific progress to date
5. Has achievable goals
6. “A Decade” is used as a point demarcating a point of partial achievement not just a period of time during which we will work
7. Integrates research as part of the process rather than a goal (not “improve social work research” but “advance research and impact, together”)

Connections to Policy Practice

- Innovative ideas can span the boundary across the aisle
- Measurable achievement toward policy goals is broadly valued
- Americans like to approach solutions slowly
- Picking the right population can help to avoid concerns about untoward effects that benefit the “unworthy”

THANK YOU

Questions, Comments, Recommendations?

Partial References

Collins, P. Y., Vikram, P., Joestl, S. S., March, D., Insel, T., & Daar, A. S. (2011). Grand challenges in global mental health. *Nature* 475 (7345), 27-30. doi:10.1038/475027a.

Grand Challenges Canada™. (January 2011). Bold Ideas for Humanity: The Grand Challenges Approach. Toronto, CA: Author.

<http://grandchallengesgmh.nimh.nih.gov/Grand%20Challenges%20in%20Global%20Mental%20Health%20Supplementary%20Information.pdf>