¿Hablas Español?

By: Rachel Morrell

Second-language skills are very important for social workers as minority populations continue to grow. Below is a discussion with Karla Algarin, a social work student who was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico and now resides in the U.S. full time.

Q. Do you believe that the ability to speak two languages is a necessary skill in the modern world?

A. Absolutely, it’s interesting to me because I grew up speaking both Spanish and English and I could not imagine myself not being able to speak two languages. The majority of my friends are able to speak at least two, often three, languages. It is such an important skill and can make life so much easier for someone interested in exploring a culture different from his or her own.

Q. How would you recommend learning Spanish to a non-native speaker?

A. I think it takes a genuine passion to learn a new language and a lot of patience. I prefer taking classes because there is more accountability within that system of learning. Also, reaching out to a native speaker is a great way to practice and learn terms that aren’t always included in a book. Getting into the groove of being able to ask and respond to questions is best for improving conversation skills because it requires a person to think on their feet and be comfortable with asking questions about what a word means, rather than simply looking it up on a translator.

Q. What level of Spanish comprehension do you feel is enough to allow communication between two people?

A. Once a person feels comfortable enough to engage someone in conversation at all, they can communicate. I don’t believe that anyone has to be perfectly fluent in order to speak another language, although that is a wonderful goal to strive for. I think it all depends on someone’s comfort level and what he or she feels they are capable of doing.

Q. How would you like to see Hispanic culture expand into U.S. culture in the next ten years?

A. I would love to see more acceptance of individuals who have immigrated to America from Latin America. Recently, certain politicians have labeled these individuals to be “rapists” or “criminals”, which is one of the most offensive and ignorant claims that I have ever heard against a minority population. Usually, Hispanic individuals who leave their countries are experiencing life or death situations that force them to seek solace in America. There is good and bad in every society, but when ignorant stereotypes are formed against this vulnerable population, more hurdles appear in the already difficult process of adapting to American society.

Auburn Recognized As Green Ribbon School

By: Morgan Knight

This year Auburn University was recognized as a green ribbon school! This recognition is an honor because it is awarded to schools that have committed to reducing environmental impact and costs; improve the health and wellness of students and staff; and provide a comprehensive environmental education. An environmental education includes the teachings of many disciplines and is particularly focused on incorporating STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), civic skills, and green career pathways.

We, as students and faculty, need to continue to keep our school green so that it is a happy and healthy environment for all. Although there are hundreds of ways to be a “Tidy Tiger,” here are four simple ideas to try and implement in your daily life when you come back to Auburn for the fall semester.

Remember – a simple act can go a long way!

How To Be a Tidy Tiger:

1. Recycle and reuse paper
2. Bike or walk to class
3. Join a clean plate campaign
4. Use a reusable water bottle

Announcements

Back to School Social Work Skate Night: 1221 Commerce Drive on August 27th from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. ($4 Admission)

Social Work O-Days: September 2nd and 3rd on Haley Center Concours

Social Work Club Meeting: September 8th in Haley Center Room TBA at 5:15

*E-mail to come with details regarding the location within Haley Center

Contact: Madison Goodwin at msg0019@auburn.edu

In 2013, close to 47 percent of immigrants were naturalized U.S. citizens. The remaining 53 percent included lawful permanent residents, unauthorized immigrants, and legal residents on temporary visas, such as students and temporary workers.

Source: www.migrationpolicy.org
Serving America’s Veterans

The summer is a patriotic time of year, including Memorial Day and July Fourth celebrations. Student Hanna Bjork outlines how social workers can support service men and women.

By: Hanna Bjork

Growing up in a military family has shaped my passion in helping the men and women who serve our country. Over the years experiences have led me to admire the work of the Veterans Affairs and what they do for over twenty million veterans in the United States. As social workers we are given the opportunity to use our knowledge and our tools to help the people around us who are vulnerable. We have the ability to give direction and provide relief during the hard times in someone’s life. It may be having grown up surrounded by these men and women, but a place in my heart will always be dedicated to enhancing the lives of the men and women in our ever-changing and dynamic military.

The main goal defined in the Veterans Affairs mission statement is through, “Serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s veterans.” Within the VA there are three important components. They are the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Each facet provides resources, ways to advocate for rights as well as informing veterans on important issues and unique benefits for them and their families. You can learn more about each branch on the Veterans Affairs website and by calling or visiting a local VA. It is essential to remember the life events and changes a veteran undergoes impacts the family as well. Therefore the VA is an important resource for both the veterans and their families. Social workers are there to help meet any need a patients may have and to actively work on improving their quality of life.

Practicum Profile

Molly Stutts

This summer I have had the privilege of working with two amazing programs for Practicum. The first is Expressions of a Braveheart, a wonderful fine arts program that was created by Angela Burque for children with mild to severe disabilities. This summer we have been creating events for the kids during the summer because many of them are home all summer with few activities to keep them busy. These children love spending time with Auburn students and being able to have something outside of their everyday routines. I have enjoyed seeing how joyful and optimistic these kids are, and seeing how the program works.

The second place where I’ve been able to complete my hours is Community Market. My field supervisor is Elsie Lott, and she is the coordinator there. She has been working at Community Market for several years now, and she has taught me so much about how it is run everyday. United Way is the primary funding source, and it was started so families could have access to food any day of the week in case of an emergency. Community Market serves all of Lee County and a Brown Bag program exists for the elderly. “Baby Manna” is used for babies and toddlers. I love working there because of the interaction we have with all of our clients. It’s worth working all day to see the faces of families who are so grateful to receive help during difficult times in their lives.

Kayla Hanrahan

I am halfway through my practicum at the Women’s Resource Center on Auburn’s campus. The Women’s Resource Center is a center on Auburn’s campus that strives to empower women and develop leadership skills in Auburn’s female students as well as advocating for issues facing women today. The center is involved in numerous projects throughout the year including Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Sexual Assault Awareness Month as well as hosting the annual Chocolate Festival, which raises awareness for healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. The center also offers students an opportunity to mentor a teenage girl for university credit from the surrounding community through the Young Women Leaders Program.

During my practicum experience I’ve been working alongside the WRC staff to prepare for events next fall and spring. Right now I’m working to implement some new ideas for next years Sexual Assault Awareness month, as well as representing the WRC at Camp War Eagle. My next project is to help prepare some statements for the Silent Witness Program that will be displayed around campus during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. My experience so far has been incredibly rewarding and I feel like I have a much greater understanding about relevant women’s issues today. The WRC offers so many amazing opportunities for students to make a difference during their time here at Auburn and I encourage everyone to think about.

About Molly: I enjoy cooking and like experimenting with new recipes. I love spending time with my friends and family. Give me a good cup of coffee and a book, and I will disappear for a few hours - especially if I’m at the beach or lake.

About Kayla: Chicago native, Irish dance loving, Harry Potter obsessed weirdo who was blessed with a natural ability to talk just about anyone’s ear off.

The Auburn University Social Work Program mission is to make a positive impact on the social problems within the State of Alabama by training generalist social work personnel who are capable of addressing the problems unique to Alabama’s poor, advocating on behalf of the disenfranchised, including children and families at risk, and dealing with diverse populations, by establishing and maintaining community partnerships, and by developing and implementing research techniques and evaluative strategies designed to address these problems in a collaborative manner.

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