

CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT  
A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

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## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

Welcome to the Columbia University School of Social Work. For over 100 years, CUSSW has been educating leaders in the field of social work and helping to shape the profession. Upon graduation, you join a network of more than 16,000 alumni worldwide. As a social worker educated at CUSSW, you will have the knowledge and skills to work in a wide range of areas including schools, NGOs, government agencies, philanthropic foundations, social service agencies, private practice, hospitals, think tanks, courts and business corporations. Comprehensive study within your practice method and field of practice will allow you to find meaningful work that is aligned with your interests and goals. As a CUSSW student, you will learn an array of transferable skills and competencies that will make you an asset to any organization.

This guide is a resource to help direct you through the career planning process. In order to do this in an efficient and effective way, the *Guide* has been organized into 5 steps. In conjunction with individual career counseling, through the Office of Career & Leadership Development, these steps will help you assess, identify, execute and manage your career planning over the course of your time at CUSSW. Additionally, the Guide includes a practice method and field of practice job outline, job search steps, tip sheets and sample documents and is also available online at <http://www.socialwork.columbia.edu/careers/>.

### **COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION STATEMENT**

Columbia University School of Social Work derives its mission from the University's goal to advance knowledge and learning at the highest level and to use that knowledge for human betterment and societal advancement. To that end, the School aims to prepare graduate students for advanced social work practice and professional leadership within a diverse learning environment, to advance knowledge for effective social work practice and education, to enhance the welfare of the citizens and communities of New York City, the nation, and around the world, and to further the goals of the university and the social work profession.

More specifically, the School's educational and research programs draw on the profession's body of knowledge, values and skills in seeking to: strengthen practices, programs, and policies that support and enhance the opportunities, resources, and capacities of people to achieve their full potential; prevent and alleviate personal, interpersonal and societal problems; redress conditions that limit human development and quality of life; and, promote human rights, social justice and respect for human diversity. Further, the School's faculty, students and graduates seek to enhance the well-being of local, national and international communities and to advance the University and the profession through collaboration, consultation, and public service.

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### **ABOUT THE OFFICE OF CAREER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

The Office of Career & Leadership Development offers guidance as you cultivate and refine your interests, experiences and goals, and provides information and tools to help you plan your career. The goal of the Office is to offer students reliable support and impart them with the knowledge and resources so that they can plan their careers and find work that is meaningful. The Office collaborates with other administrative offices and faculty within CUSSW to ensure that you are supported from the time that you apply to CUSSW, throughout your educational course until years after you graduate.

Throughout the academic year, the Office of Career Development offers individual career counseling to students both by appointment and during weekly drop in hours. Individual counseling gives you the option to focus on your particular career issues. The Office also supports students through career focused programming and events including workshops, alumni panels, networking opportunities and career fairs. Workshops are offered during the Fall and Spring semesters and provide tips on many areas including writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing, networking and licensing. Because CUSSW students come from around the world, we also offer workshops tailored to the needs of international students. Additionally, we co-host the Not-For-Profit and Public Service Career Fair and the Master's Level Social Work Job Fair.

### **OFFICE OF CAREER AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Location: Room 524 & 525

Address: 1255 Amsterdam Avenue, Room 525, Mail Code 4600 NY, NY 10027

Website: <http://www.socialwork.columbia.edu/careers/>

To make an individual appointment: <http://www.rich35.com/columbia/>

Director: Kim Barberich

Telephone: 212-851-2321

Fax: 212-932-7817

Email: [kcb2105@columbia.edu](mailto:kcb2105@columbia.edu)

Career Counselor: Michelle Kelly

Telephone: 212-851-2399

Email: [mtk12@columbia.edu](mailto:mtk12@columbia.edu)

For a list Career Development workshop and events go to:

<http://www.socialwork.columbia.edu/careers/all/calendar.html>

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### **HOW TO USE THE CAREER PLANNING CHART**

The Career Planning Chart on pg. 66-67 (and online at <http://www.socialwork.columbia.edu/careers/>) allows you to plan, track and benchmark your career development goals. The Chart maps the essential career planning tasks across the progression of four semesters. The chart lists the order of these tasks and indicates the period, during your first or second year, that they should be completed. It also allows you to record the status of each task along with any roadblocks you run into. For Advanced Standing, Extended and Reduced Residency students, the tasks can be merged across the progression of two semesters or adapted during a counseling appointment to align with your time schedule. You should bring your Career Planning Chart when you come to any workshops or career counseling appointments. The management of your career planning process will allow you to realize your professional goals.

### **CUSSW ERECRUITING WEBSITE**

CUSSW has its own web-based recruiting site called *eRecruiting*. This site allows employers to post jobs and summer internships exclusively for CUSSW master-level students. Each student is provided with a unique username, and can peruse the site to do career research, post career related documents and apply for jobs and summer opportunities.

To log on to eRecruiting:

1. Go to the Career & Leadership Development page on the CUSSW Website <http://cussw-msw.experience.com>
2. Enter user name & password (your username is your uni email and your password is *cussw* which you can change once you are logged on).
3. Congratulations! You are now on the eRecruiting Network at the Columbia University School of Social Work.
4. Forgot your password? No problem, just click on *Forgot your password?* on the upper right of the page and it will be emailed to you.

### **BLOG**

The Office of Career & Leadership Development has its own blog at <http://cusocialworkcareers.wordpress.com/>. Check it out for career information, upcoming career related workshops and events at CUSSW and beyond, helpful job links and news related to the field of social work.

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### **METHOD & FIELD JOB OUTLINE**

CUSSW has an exceptional curriculum that is aimed at preparing exemplary professional social workers. In the first and second semesters, you will build the foundation for a successful social work career by focusing on practice, policy, research, and ethics. During the third and fourth semesters, in-depth study of a chosen practice method and field of practice will prepare you for work in a particular professional domain. The following information offers career direction as it relates to the four practice methods and seven fields of practice. Because social work is such a broad and diverse profession, there is overlap of the four practice methods and such also of the corresponding professional areas outlined below. Following the method/field job outline, you will also find an additional list of transferable skills and competencies that you will acquire as a student at CUSSW. These skills and competencies will help you market yourself as a well rounded and knowledgeable professional.

### **◆ Practice Method Concentrations**

#### **Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice**

Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice emphasizes assessment, intervention, monitoring and evaluation, and uses individual, family, group, and case management strategies. Skills learned include:

- Solid understanding of client engagement and assessment
- Understanding of differential diagnosis
- Clinical application of risk and resiliency theories
- Knowledge of clinical issues with specific client populations
- Evidence based social work thinking and practice
- Interdisciplinary collaboration & awareness of experts in field

#### *Professional Areas:*

- **Health Care:** Social workers help patients handle the personal and social factors that come with illness by provide direct service: assessing a patient's needs, managing the patient's services, planning for care after recovery, educating patients and their families, and helping patients cope with illness related personal and psychological issues.  
*Employers include: hospitals, VA hospitals, HMOs, nursing homes, hospice and palliative care facilities, senior centers, and community health clinics.*
- **Substance Abuse Treatment:** Social workers trained in alcohol and drug treatment help individuals, families and communities recover from substance abuse by providing case management, group and individual therapy, family counseling, advocacy for jobs and housing, community resource development and policy making initiatives. Note: employers often request additional qualifications for this work including a certification as a Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC).  
*Employers include: inpatient and outpatient treatment facilities, methadone maintenance clinics, community development agencies, family*

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*service agencies, schools, college/university counseling services, victim services agencies, VA Hospitals and correctional facilities.*

- **Mental Health Care:** Social workers practice in both urban and rural settings and provide direct service to individuals, families and groups. Clients can be dealing with a wide range of issues including relationship discord, grief, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and personality disorders.  
*Employers include: community mental health centers, psychiatric hospitals, VA hospitals, inpatient treatment facilities, victim services programs, college/university counseling services, family service agencies, correctional facilities and private practice.*
  
- **School Social Work:** Social workers practice within schools and provide a link between the student's school, home and community. They provide direct service to students and focus on issues that interfere with a student's success in school including truancy, suicide risk, violence, drug and alcohol abuse, school dropout, teen pregnancy, homelessness and relationship discord. Social workers also often work to address the needs of students in special education classes. Social workers utilize their skills and knowledge for counseling, conflict resolution, outreach to the community, consultation with school staff, information and referral to students and families, and evaluation of services provided by the school.  
*Employers include: elementary and secondary public, private and charter schools, special education placement offices and Head Start centers.*

### **Advanced Generalist Practice and Programming (AGPP)**

AGPP students learn to apply an interactive, integrated perspective to Social Work practice & programming. AGPP emphasizes direct and community practice, movement from case to cause, and development of innovative and responsive social programs and program resources, including staffing and funding. Skills learned include:

- Micro level: direct practice, counseling, interviewing, assessment, referral
- Mezzo level: needs assessment, program evaluation, program design & development, proposal writing, planning, advocacy, coalition building
- Macro level: administration, policy, education

Professional Areas:

- **Community Organizing:** Social workers practice building consensus around community issues. This work can involve raising the public consciousness about a matter of concern, gathering people together to work for a common goal or to receive specialized services. Social workers gather information, create strategic plans, educate the public, raise funds, manage conflict, train new leaders, and develop resources and networks.

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*Employers include: community development agencies, community coalitions, social justice organizations, human rights organizations, advocacy, minority and religious representation groups.*

- **Social Service Administration & Management:** Social workers take on various roles within both public and private organizations (i.e. Executive Director, Director, Program Director, Program Officer, Program Analyst). They plan and evaluate services, projects and programs, formulate policy, develop budgets, manage operations, raise funds, allocate resources, oversee public relations, and train and supervise employees. Social workers often focus on public welfare by providing support to vulnerable populations including children, older adults, and people with chronic or debilitating conditions. Some social workers focus specifically on children by aiding struggling families to prevent problems that could result in neglect or abuse. Social workers also work to eliminate social conditions that negatively affect children including inadequate housing, poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence and lack of access to health care.  
*Employers include: family service agencies, public & private child welfare agencies, agencies on aging, state mental health departments, employee assistance programs, probation departments, hospitals, public welfare agencies, adoption agencies, day care centers and foster care agencies.*

- **Development/Foundation:** Social workers have the knowledge and skills to work as Program Associates/Officers where they assess grant proposals and develop, maintain and evaluate grant making initiatives or as Development Officers where they write grants and conduct fundraising endeavors.  
*Employers include: private or charitable foundations (i.e. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Habitat for Humanity) are non-profit organizations established by an individual, a family or a group for philanthropic purposes. A foundation can either donate funds to individuals or organizations that are aligned with the issues that it supports or provide the main source of funding for their own charitable endeavors.*

### **Policy Practice**

Policy Practice is the work of establishing or changing social policy. This method is focused on policy analysis and advocacy, including the knowledge, values, and skills to define policy issues from a social work perspective.

Skills learned include:

- Policymaking process: identify issue, develop options, enact policy, implement policy and evaluate outcomes
- Ability to conduct research, collect and analyze policy data
- Preparation of testimony
- Knowledge of theoretical frameworks of policymaking
- Use of quantitative and qualitative data

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- Understanding of intersect btw. micro (client) and macro (policy) level

Professional Areas:

- **Policy & Planning:** Social workers are in a unique position to work in any organization that examines policy to meet human needs. Social workers identify social problems from homelessness to racism to mental illness, study the needs and issues of affected individuals and communities, conduct research, propose legislation and suggest different approaches or new programs. Responsibilities include compiling data, analyzing legislation, drafting policy briefs, testifying at public hearings, working with the media, talking with policymakers, lobbying elected officials and writing grants.

*Employers include: social service agencies, community organizations, public interest groups, local, state and federal government, voluntary health and welfare councils, advocacy organizations, development corporations, think tanks, trade associations, non-profit organizations, professional associations and INGOs.*

- **Research:** Social workers work as a Researchers, Assistants, Associates, Analysts or Managers within various types of research driven organizations. Social Workers provide the framework for evidence based practice by helping to develop and define concepts and determine whether a program is effective in affecting social change. Responsibilities as a researcher include: analyzing data, drafting documents, developing research plans, creating funding proposals, and publishing and presenting findings to various outlets. Note: senior positions within research based organizations often require a PhD.

*Employers include: schools of social work, government agencies, think tanks, institutes, consulting firms and foundations.*

- **Politics (state, local, national):** Social workers find that by holding an elected office they are able to advocate for a social cause on a different level. Others find that their skills work best in support of a candidate who has the ability to make the social change they support.

*Employers include: political campaigns, political parties, schools boards, advocacy groups and associations.*

### **Social Enterprise Administration (SEA)**

SEA builds knowledge, skills, and values in administering and managing social service programs and organizations. Skills learned include:

- Program planning & evaluation
- Organizational and community development
- Human resource management
- Financial management
- Staff development and training
- Managing for social responsibility and social justice

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Professional areas:

- Administration & Management: Social workers practice in both the public and private sector as administrators and managers who plan and evaluate services & programs, formulate policy, develop budgets, manage operations, raise funds, allocate resources, oversee public relations and direct, train, supervise and evaluate employees.  
*Employers include: not-for profits, social enterprise businesses, social service agencies, community organizations and hospitals.*
  
- Human Resources: Social workers can utilize their skills and knowledge in many areas within a human resources department. These areas include: employee assistance/relations, recruitment & hiring, program training, development and evaluation, organizational development, wellness programs and generalist practices.  
*Employers include: corporations, mid-level sized businesses, not-for-profits, schools and government agencies.*
  
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Social workers working for an EAP help employees and their families with problems related to job performance and satisfaction including emotional distress, health concerns, financial challenges, family issues (children or aging parents), eating disorders, substance abuse, safe working environments and work relationship issues. Social workers do assessments, counseling and referral services.  
*Employers include: EAPs can be independent or employed by corporations, businesses, labor unions and organizational consulting firms.*

Corporate Social Responsibility and Philanthropy: Social workers can impact the departments within a corporation that accomplish work with a social component. Social Responsibility examines the impact of their organization's actions and outcomes on the environment, customers, employees, shareholders, communities and other stakeholders. Philanthropy voluntarily donates the corporation's funds, products or employee volunteerism to charitable organizations. Corporate philanthropy is an important function of a corporation's broader social responsibility.

*Employers include: multinational and national corporations*

Product Development: Social workers interested in social welfare with a design edge can work as analysts or managers for organizations that design and development low-cost products and services to meet the needs of the world's poor.

*Employers include: multinational and national corporations and businesses, and social enterprise businesses.*

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- **Social Marketing:** Social workers can provide their knowledge and experience within an organization focused on marketing products, service or idea to achieve a social good.

*Employers include: marketing agencies, advertising agencies, public relations firms, and marketing depts. within businesses or corporations.*

### ◆ **Fields of Practice**

#### **Aging**

The role, status, and social problems of the elderly; sociology of the family; age stratification; policies providing financial support, health, and social care for the elderly; and social service provisions for the aged.

*Employers include: hospitals, insurance companies, nursing homes, retirement communities, senior centers, agencies on aging, senior volunteer programs, senior housing facilities, mental health centers, adult day care centers, home health care, rehabilitation centers and social service agencies.*

#### **Contemporary Social Issues (CSI)**

Emerging social problems, their etiology, epidemiology, and interconnections; relevant policies, programs, and practices; and coordination or lack thereof among service systems that seek to address these problems. Contemporary social issues, via advocacy and a forensic approach, addresses the impact of issues and problems in the criminal justice system, homelessness, domestic violence/violence, and substance abuse and their impact on individuals, groups, couples, families, communities, and society.

*Employers include: criminal justice system (courts, police departments, DA's office), detention centers, correctional facilities, family treatment centers, social welfare agencies and crime victims services.*

#### **Family, Youth, and Children's Services**

The economic and social status and service needs of families, youth, and children; laws, funding, and service organizations; family support and child care services; preventive and protective services; school-related and/or school-based services; adolescent issues.

*Employers include: adoption agencies, day care centers, foster care agencies, public & private child welfare agencies, family service agencies and youth development programs.*

#### **Health, Mental Health, and Disabilities**

Identification of health factors and social stressors that affect clients; program development and evaluation; fiscal, legal, and organizational sanctions and influences, including managed care; assessment of system entry points for client care and advocacy.

*Employers include: hospitals, HMOs, nursing homes, hospice and palliative care facilities, home health care, senior centers, community health clinics, community mental health centers, psychiatric hospitals, inpatient and*

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*outpatients treatment centers, family service centers, private practice, schools, employment services, HIV/AIDS services, rehabilitation centers and government agencies.*

### **International Social Welfare and Services to Immigrants and Refugees**

Global social problems; international trends in social policies and programs, including response to disasters; needs of immigrants and refugees; community development; and activities of major international organizations and voluntary agencies working internationally.

*Employers include: NGOs, INGOs, domestic and international relief organizations, human rights organizations, refugee relief organizations, international adoption agencies, inter-governmental organizations, employment services, public & private child welfare agencies and family service agencies.*

### **School-Based and School-Linked Services**

Practice issues in public education; problems of school failure; design, administration, financing, delivery, and evaluation of school-based or school-linked child and family services; interdisciplinary collaboration.

*Employers include: elementary and secondary public, private and charter schools, special education placement offices and head start centers.*

### **World of Work**

The composition, status, and needs of the labor force; conditions interfering with work roles; services for clients as workers and for their dependents; collective bargaining; discrimination, and unequal opportunity; interdisciplinary initiatives; and legislation related to work and social welfare.

*Employers include: corporations, non-profits, EAPs, hospitals, unions and social service agencies.*

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### ◆ Transferable Skills

#### **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving/Research**

*Understand the Steps Involved in Critical Thinking:*

- Define the problem and identify possible causes
- Anticipate problems before they occur
- Recognize if a problem needs to be addressed
- Formulate questions to clarify problems, topics or issues

*Deploy Tools for Effective Problem-Solving:*

- Develop plans to implement solutions
- Multi-tasking: ability to handle more than one problem at a time
- Identify range of solutions and select most appropriate ones
- Facilitate groups in identifying and evaluating possible solutions

*Develop Methods for Conducting Successful Research:*

- Identify appropriate information sources for problem solving
- Use a variety of sources of information
- Apply a variety of methods to test the validity of data
- Conceptualize future needs and find solutions to meet those needs

#### **Verbal and Written Communication**

*Present Ideas Cogently, Creatively and Effectively:*

- Present ideas in a concise, logical and persuasive format that can speak to both targeted and broader audiences
- Communicate in a range of media: articles, presentations, etc.
- Participate effectively in group discussions
- Discern and respond to verbal and non-verbal messages
- Respond appropriately to both positive and negative feedback
- Discuss important and controversial issues with tact, sensitivity, and insight within multiple industries.

#### **Decision Making/Teamwork**

*Identify the Practices and Dynamics of Successful Teamwork/Team Building:*

- Identify, prioritize and delegate tasks to be accomplished
- Motivate others to work towards a common goal
- Facilitate group participation in the decision-making/planning process
- Coordinate tasks and progress of group members
- Use management/mentoring skills with peers and/or subordinates
- Recognize members' strengths and weaknesses to build an effective and cohesive team
- Give constructive feedback and praise for accomplishments

#### **Enterprise Leadership**

*Understand the Practices of Effective Leadership:*

- Evaluate all options and make effective decisions even when under time pressure
- Take responsibility for decisions
- Evaluate the effects and effectiveness of a decision

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- Explain unpopular decisions to others in a clear but sensitive manner
- Use creativity and initiative to stimulate ideas and develop solutions
- Deal effectively with resistance and setbacks
- Develop self-awareness, self-confidence and independence

### **Diversity/Global Perspectives**

*Appreciate People's Diverse Backgrounds, Interests, and Opinions:*

- Able to work with people from different backgrounds and perspectives
- Read and speak a foreign language
- Are flexible, open to change and willing to compromise
- Help people make the most of diverse opinions and interests
- Appreciate different viewpoints and cultural perspectives
- Recognize contributions from different areas of the world in the arts, literature, science and social science
- Able to respond appropriately to continually changing circumstances

### **Socially-Responsible Orientation/Educators**

*Driven to Make a Difference through Academia, Research, Gov't & NFPs*

- Able to work effectively with a broad range of people including clients, elected officials, volunteers, donors and local civic leaders
- Possess demonstrable personal integrity and business ethic
- Committed to promoting change and new ideas
- Possess strong interpersonal and networking skills
- Able to make decisions that increase both the individual and the common good
- Self-motivated to tackle demanding tasks and offer to get involved
- Possess the stamina and tenacity to see a project through to end

*Demonstrate Effective Teaching/Training Skills and Techniques:*

- Able to explain and demonstrate complex and abstract ideas
- Are patient, persistent and motivated to bring out the best in others
- Can evaluate and appraise others' work and skills objectively
- Able to cope with stress and remain calm under pressure

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### **LET'S GET STARTED: THE 5 STEPS TO CAREER PLANNING**

As you consider your career plans it is important that you understand yourself, develop your marketing tools, conduct career related research, and identify various career opportunities so that you can make informed, appropriate career decisions. There are 5 steps to the job search process. Following these steps will help you plan and conduct an efficient and successful job search.

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Self Assessment</b>
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Develop Marketing Tools</b>
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Career Research</b>
<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Identify &amp; Execute</b>
<b>Step 5</b>	<b>Prepare for Interview</b>

#### ***STEP 1: SELF ASSESSMENT***

The first step is to view yourself from a professional perspective and clarify your VIPS (for a self assessment worksheet go to pages 46-48).

- *Values & Lifestyle:* these are a set of standards that determine attitudes and choices and can help lay important groundwork for making good work/life decisions.
  - Do you value: wealth? time with family? creativity?
  - What kind of work culture or environment do you want?
  - Where do you want to live?
- *Interests/Objectives:* these are things that appeal and excite you. Think about your Method of Concentration and Field of Practice. What function(s) do you want to carry out: assessment, direct practice, analysis, evaluation, programming, management, advocacy, research, community development, etc.
  - What issues are you passionate about: domestic violence, mental health, HIV/AIDS, housing, etc.
  - What sector do you want to work in: NFP, public, government
  - What kind of organization or institution do you want to work in: hospital, school, community center, mental health clinic, foundation, think tank government agency, international welfare organization, etc.
  - What populations are you interested in: homeless, veterans, refugees, immigrants, women, children, etc.

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- *Personality*: each individual has distinctive qualities and character traits. Defining who you are can help project where you want your career to take you.
- *Skills & Knowledge*: these include your abilities, talents, aptitudes and strengths. Consider the areas you have focused on through your education, training, reading and experience. It is important to define your skills and to ascertain which ones you would like to use in a job and ones that you would not.

### **STEP 2: DEVELOP A MARKETING STRATEGY**

Once you have determined your VIPs, it is time to refine your marketing tools. These tools include your resume, cover letter, references and elevator speech or networking introduction.

#### ◆ **WRITING A WINNING RESUME**

##### **What is a résumé?**

An American resume is a marketing tool (it is not an autobiographical summary). You are marketing yourself to a potential employer, showcasing those skills, achievements, and qualifications that relate *directly* to the type of position(s) you are pursuing. It should be written with care and consideration, and always targeted toward the specific employer to whom you are applying. Make sure to include all of your experiences including both paid & unpaid, volunteer, leadership, internship, international, presentations, etc. Your resume should include specific descriptions that give the reader a solid picture of your accomplishments and capabilities.

When writing your resume ask yourself: Have I effectively presented my skills, qualifications, and achievements? Have I done enough research on the employer and the job to know what is needed in that position so I can match my skills to their needs?

##### **What are the standards for formatting and length?**

The required length of a resume depends on the sector to which you are applying. For social service and education-type positions, a two page resume is acceptable, as long as the content warrants it. For corporate positions, a one page resume is essential.

##### **The difference between a resume and curriculum vitae?**

A curriculum vitae (CV) concentrates on academic pursuits and de-emphasizes materials not directly related to educational background and achievement. Unlike a resume, a CV is a more comprehensive document that includes all relevant content. The content determines the length of the CV, since it includes publications, presentations, grants, etc. A CV is appropriate for masters and doctoral graduates seeking teaching or research positions. Colleges, universities, and research institutions generally require a CV whereas others employers prefer a resume.

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### What should be included?

- Lead with your strengths! Select and order the major content categories so that the most relevant information is visible first.
- Use action verbs to describe your achievements, depicting yourself as someone who *produces, develops, analyzes* or *introduces*, as opposed to one who *participated in* or *was responsible for*. Pick up the *Power Verbs* tip sheet online or in Career Development.
- Vary the verbs used, and always use the present tense for current jobs and past tense for previous jobs.
- Emphasize skills and experience related to your field of interest and/or positions desired.
- Include occupation or industry specific-key words.
- Be achievement and results-oriented in your position descriptions. Communicate your skills, capabilities, and accomplishments. Quantify achievements by citing numbers, dollars, percentages or time if possible
- Be consistent in your formatting- watch how you list states, dates, etc.
- Proofread carefully!!!! Errors are unacceptable.
- If your resume is 2 pages include your name and page # on 2<sup>nd</sup> page.
- Do not include personal information such as age, health, marital status, height, weight, and religion.
- Do not use the first person singular case (do not use "I").
- Make an appointment or stop by during drop in hours to review your resume with Career Development.

### What goes on a résumé?

- **Identification information**  
Include your name, address, telephone number, and Columbia e-mail address. If you have to use another email address make certain it is "appropriate" for employers. For example, it would not be acceptable to use partygirl@gmail.com or studman@yahoo.com.
- **Objective, Summery or Professional Profile**  
Generally used by professionals with 4+ years of experience, this section consists of 2-3 sentences outlining a specific career goal or listing specific skills, accomplishments, and strengths that directly relate to your field of interest.
- **Education**  
In reverse chronological order (beginning with CUSSW); specify each college/university attended, its location (city and state), degree received, graduation date (month and year), and major.
- **Experience**  
List all positions in reverse chronological order. This section can include both paid and unpaid positions, or it can be divided into different categories (e.g., Professional Experience, Related Experience, Research Experience, Clinical Experience, Program Development Experience, International Experience, Volunteer Experience) in order

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to prioritize your experience. For every position, include the following: employer, city, state, job title, dates of employment, and a description of your accomplishments. Focus on accomplishments that relate to the type of position you are seeking. Be sure to use power verbs that communicate relevant transferable skills.

- **Honors/Awards**

Honors may be listed as a separate category or included in other sections such as Education. List scholarships, assistantships, academic honors, community achievements, and/or professional awards.

- **Activities**

Include involvement in community and campus activities organizations. Highlight significant achievements such as committee work and leadership positions.

- **Skills (Computer, Languages, etc.)**

These can be listed as separate categories or grouped together under one general heading. All computer and language skills should be included on your resume.

- **Professional Affiliations**

List the names of professional organizations (i.e. NASW) to which you belong, indicating leadership positions and committee work where appropriate. Be sure to include the corresponding years of membership.

- **Papers/Publications/Presentations**

List published works and presentations when appropriate.

- **Interests/Additional Information**

Be specific and list interests/activities to which you devote considerable time or which you excel. List achievements that do not fit under other categories.

\* See sample resumes on page 49-58

#### ◆ WRITING A STRONG COVER LETTER

##### **Why do you have to write cover letters?**

Cover letters serve several purposes. They are NOT simply paragraph version of your resume. In your cover letter you are matching your background, skills, and abilities to the needs of the employer and conveying your interest in working for them. This portrays your knowledge of their needs and how you can address them. Form cover letters do not accomplish this goal, so take the time to tailor it to your specific audience. Secondly, the cover letter serves as a sample of your writing ability. So, being well-written and free of typographical and grammatical errors is essential.

##### **When do I send one?**

Your cover letter should accompany your resume whenever you do not. If you are attending a career fair, a cover letter is not necessary.

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### **Is there a set length?**

With the exception of faculty positions, cover letters should never exceed one page. Cover letters for faculty positions can exceed that limitation if it includes your research areas and teaching interests.

### **What is the typical format?**

A cover letter is a business correspondence, so it should be formatted like a business letter. It should lead with your address (or your header), the date, recipient name and address. Your salutation should be followed with a colon rather than a comma. Standard business letter format also includes the word Enclosure (if mailing) or Attachment (if emailing) at the bottom of the letter to indicate that your resume is included.

### **Who do I make the letter out to?**

Do your homework. If no contact person is included in the job listing, do research online to determine who the position reports to or telephone the main line of the employer and ask who you should direct the letter to. (Do not call the employer if they state no phone calls!) If you are unable to find a specific person's name, address your letter to a relevant title (i.e. Dear Human Resources Manager or Dear Search Committee or Dear Clinical Director). If you can not find the relevant title a simple To whom it may concern or Dear Sir/Madam will suffice.

### **What if I'm asked about my required salary or salary history?**

Employers often ask an applicant to indicate salary requirements in his/her cover letter or include a salary history document as an attachment. Salary requirements can be incorporated as a sentence in the first paragraph of your cover letter (i.e. *I am looking for a full time position in medical social work with an annual salary of \$50,000*). A salary history document should be formatted exactly like your resume with your name and contact information on the top. List past employers with employment dates chronologically and indicate your past salaries accordingly. Finally, be honest as previous salary information can be verified.

### **What's the best way to submit my resume and cover letter?**

Follow the employer's instructions! If the employer provides several options (i.e. email, hard mail, fax, etc.), select the one that is best for you. Keep in mind email and faxes arrive immediately, so these are the best modalities if under a tight deadline. If emailing, place your cover letter in the body of the email and include your resume as word attachment. If an employer requests no attachments and you want to email your materials, copy your resume into the body of your email after your cover letter.

◆ **See sample cover letters on page 59-62**

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### ◆ PRESENTING REFERENCES

References are individuals who can speak about you, your work ethic, academic performance, skills and abilities to prospective employers. There is no rule regarding the amount of time you should know someone before listing her/him as a reference. As long as a reference can speak to your professional skills and abilities you can include her/him. You should have three to five references which can include former employers, field placement supervisors, internship supervisors, volunteer supervisors or professors. Always ask permission before listing someone as a reference. Do not ask friends or family members to be references for you unless you have worked for them as an employee.

A list of references is a supplemental document to your resume and should be provided only when asked either during or after an interview. When an interviewer asks if she can contact a former employer you can provide her with your reference document. If you are asked to complete an application that asks for references, you can include the same names on the application that are listed on your reference document. The reference document should be formatted exactly like your resume with your name and contact information on the top. Include the following information for each of your references:

- Name
- Organization/Company
- Phone Number
- Title
- Street Address
- E-mail (optional)

As note, written recommendations are typically appropriate for graduate school or teaching positions. Phone recommendations are the preferred method for obtaining information by prospective employers.

### ◆ NETWORKING: USING THE ELEVATOR SPEECH

Summarize your career experiences, skills & goals into an enthusiastic 1-2 minute elevator speech that includes who you are, what you do and what you are looking for. Think about what you want people to know about you, the specifics about the kind of job you are looking for, your desired position, ideal job responsibilities & preferred geographic location. The ability to verbalize your background and career goals is essential to networking and landing a job. Once you have your speech ready, practice!

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***“Hello, my name is Melinda Stevens. I am a second year graduate student at the Columbia University School of Social Work. My concentration is in Policy Practice with a focus on immigrants and refugees. My field placement is at the Global Youth Action Network, a youth led global network of youth organizations. I understand that you're working at the United Nations. I'd like to know how you got where you are today, and what advice you'd have for an upcoming graduate interested in working at the UN.”***

Networking, or relationship building, is another way to increase your chances of learning about job opportunities, and expand your connections in your chosen career field. It can be the single most effective tool in your effort to find a job. Studies repeatedly show that over 50% of job seekers find positions through networking. Networking is your chance to speak with people who are already in your field to learn more about their careers and how to develop your own. This tool is powerful because it can give you honest information that you can't find anywhere else, from job opportunities that are not listed to people's perspectives on future trends and what they find satisfying and/or dissatisfying about what they do. This information can then be used to help you find a job or to clarify your decisions about what type of job you might be interested in.

To begin networking you must first overcome your negative perceptions and/or fears. The more networking you do the easier it becomes. Just spread the word that you're looking for a job and ask if anyone has a contact that might be able to offer advice. Your network can include:

- Personal Contacts: family and friends
- Professional Contacts: classmates, colleagues, alumni, faculty, field placement supervisors, former employers, etc.
- Organizational Contacts: social clubs, religious affiliations, gym members, NASW, etc.

In addition, take full advantage of CUSSW workshops and events. In collaboration with Alumni Relations, the Student Union and various student caucuses, the Office of Career Development co-hosts alumni networking events and panels including the *CUSSW Alumni of Color Networking Event; Wine, Cheese & Networking; Social Work Careers in... ;* and *What to Expect After you Graduate.*

Questions to ask alumni and others in your network:

- What has been your career path to date?
- How did you get your current position?
- What do you like best about your work? Job? Organization?
- What professional organizations and journals are important to you?

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- What skills do you think successful people in your area of work/social work possess?
- What was the best advice you received from someone in social work when you were just starting?
- What is the most effective strategy for conducting a job search in this field?
- Can you think of any other individuals who might provide additional information about your organization or the field of social work?

Once you begin networking make sure to maintain the contacts you have worked hard to make by keeping track of them with a contact list, informing them of your job search progress and expressing your appreciation to anyone that helps you by sending thank you notes or emails.

### **STEP 3: RESEARCH**

Schedule 1 hour each week solely for career research. Gather information on social work field(s), relevant organizations and available opportunities. Conduct research on your professional area(s) of interest and figure out where you fit in best. Your research should include:

- Reviewing the websites of relevant organizations
- Searching CUSSW eRecruiting and other online job sites
- Joining professional social work organizations to receive valuable information (NASW, CSWE, CSWF, etc.)
- Assessing online or printed directories (Child Welfare League of America, United Way, etc.)
- Reading publications (The New Social Worker, Journal of Social Work, Chronicle of Philanthropy, NEED Magazine, Good Magazine)
- Conducting informational interviews – the *Informational Interview* tip sheet is available online or in the office
- Arranging for site visits / shadowing opportunities
- Collecting salary data (Helpful websites: [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com), [www.salaryexpert.com](http://www.salaryexpert.com), [www.wetfeet.com](http://www.wetfeet.com), [www.wageweb.com](http://www.wageweb.com))

Your goal for researching is to answer the following questions:

- Which organizations do the kind of work I am interested in doing?
- Do these organizations hire employees with my skills and experience?
- What is the salary range for the work I want to do?

As you begin to compile a *Potential Employer List*, keep track of the following pertinent information in a notebook or word document:

- Organization name and website address
- Contact name, title, phone #, email & address
- Mission or purpose of organization
- Employment opportunities

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### **STEP 4: EXECUTE THE JOB SEARCH: IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES & APPLY**

You will need to pursue several strategies to identify job opportunities. Job search strategies can be divided into two categories: traditional and targeted. The traditional approach includes applying for job postings on an organization's website, using CUSSW's eRecruiting website, via general job websites (i.e. [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)), through field specific websites ([www.socialservice.com](http://www.socialservice.com)) and by responding to classifieds on/in newspapers. When hunting for positions online don't just use *social worker* as a title search. Be creative – search using other job titles and key words including counselor, gerontology, manager, human resources, substance abuse, mental health, social welfare policy, etc.

A targeted approach to identifying job opportunities is more proactive. It entails reviewing your self-assessment (STEP 1), utilizing your marketing tools (STEP 2) and applying your research (STEP 3). Begin by sending a cover letter and resume to each organization on your *Potential Employer List*. Your cover letters should clearly state why your professional interests are aligned with the goals or mission of each organization. Because you are the one reaching out, this approach also requires that you follow up with the organization, via email or phone, 7-10 days after sending your resume.

### ◆ **CAREER FAIRS**

Career or job fairs are another great way to find out about full-time and summer opportunities, develop professional contacts and gather information to help you make career decisions. Each year in partnership with the Columbia Center of Career Education (CCE) and the consortium of New York Graduate Schools of Social Work, we co-host the Not-For-Profit and Public Service Career Fair and the Master's Level Social Work Job Fair respectively. CUSSW students are also welcome to attend the Teachers College PreK-12 Education Career Fair and the CCE For-Profit Career Fair (dates for fairs are available on the Career Development website). In addition to the career fairs affiliated with CUSSW you should attend other career fairs that reflect your professional interests. Below are some tips on preparing and making the most of a career/job fair.

Before:

- Visit the Office of Career & Leadership Development or other website to see which organizations are attending. Decide which ones you will approach.
- Make sure that your resume is up-to-date and that you have enough copies to give one to each potential employer. You do not need to provide employers with a cover letter.
- Prepare and practice your elevator speech.

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- Do some basic online research for each organization and prepare 2 informational questions to ask each of them. Since you may not have a lot of time to talk, save lengthy questions for an interview or a follow up e-mail.
- Dress professionally. A neutral color suit is preferable, but a nice dress shirt, a tie and pants are also fine for men, and a blouse and knee-length skirt or pants are acceptable for women. No jeans, sweats and sneakers even if you are coming straight from class.
- Carry a portfolio or clean folder with your resumes, a pad and a pen. Try to minimize the amount of extra “stuff” (bags, coat, etc.) you have with you.

### During:

- Learn the layout of the fair and determine the locations of organizations of interest. Most career fairs will provide you with a map of the room and booklet listing each organization.
- Visit each of your targeted tables and speak with at least one of the organization’s representatives. Be sure to smile, shake hands, introduce yourself and offer them your resume. Ask each representative that you talk to for a business card and collect the company literature before you go to the next organizations.
- If possible, jot down some quick notes about your conversations before your next stop. This will help you remember which organizations you were especially interested in later on. It will also help you personalize the thank you notes you write afterwards.

### After:

- Send thank you letters/e-mails to the organizations you are interested in. Personalize all correspondence!

### ***STEP 5: INTERVIEWING***

When you are asked to interview with an organization, you know that your resume and cover letter have done their job! Keep in mind, successful interviewing is a skill that can be learned. The key is to adequately prepare. The more prepared you are going into an interview the better your chances are for getting a second interview or job offer. Among many skills and qualities, employers typically look for candidates that demonstrate creativity, flexibility, honesty and initiative as well as possess strong written and verbal communication, interpersonal, and leadership skills.

Prior to the interview, find out from the employer what type of interview you will be having and prepare for that type of interview (in-person, phone, panel, group). Develop 3-4 questions that you want to ask the employer. Practice by scheduling a mock interview with the Office of Career & Leadership Development. Finally, wear a suit or professional attire, bring 4-5 copies of your resume and a list of references to the interview. Don’t forget

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to send the employer a thank you email or handwritten note the day after the interview. [FYI: both notes and emails are acceptable however emails tend to reach the interviewer quicker and don't get lost in the mail). Below are some steps to help you prepare for the interviewing process.

### **Research**

- *The organization/department:*  
Take the time to learn as much as possible about the employer. Go to their website and review the values and mission of the organization. Review the different departments and how they work together to accomplish the organization's goal. Look at the programs and/or services offered by the area you are interviewing for. Review the staff makeup and profiles if possible.
- *The position:*  
Closely examine the job description. Identify the key qualities they are looking for and specific responsibilities the position entails.
- *The interviewer:*  
If you know who will be interviewing you, take the time to research her/him/them as well. Understand their roles in the organization and their respective backgrounds. Take a minute to "Google" them to see what they are involved in professionally (keep the focus on their professional involvement- not on their personal lives).
- *Yourself:*  
Review the cover letter and resume you submitted thoroughly. Note the experiences you have had that are most relevant for the position. Analyze your own background. What are your skills (content, functional, adaptive) that relate to the desired role? What types of work cultures do you prefer? This prepares you to think on your feet! Identify examples from your past experience in which you demonstrated those skills. How can you "tell a story" about your particular skills or knowledge? Set your internal agenda for the interview by conducting a strengths exercise. Quickly brainstorm 50 strengths you possess. After compiling the list, go back through and identify the top five that best pertain to this position and this employer. Use this list to guide you through the interview process as your internal agenda. Your goal during the interview is to successfully convey these qualities and your related experiences. Give some thought to the areas you would like to improve. Be prepared to talk about mistakes, when things didn't go as planned, self understanding and exploration, things you might have done differently.

### **Prepare questions for the employer**

Asking the employer questions reflects your motivation, interests, priorities, and energy. This is also your opportunity to set the agenda for the interview and to determine if this opportunity is right for you. Good questions for the employer are related to the job to which you are applying and demonstrate

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your knowledge of their organization. Ask about job duties, the department, supervision, and growth opportunities. Avoid questions about benefits, salary, etc. Here are some suggested questions to ask the employer:

- What are you looking for in your ideal candidate for this position?
- What do you perceive to be the most difficult part of the job?  
What types of challenges would I face in this position/department?
- How would you describe the working environment?
- How would you describe the management style of the area?
- What professional development opportunities are available to me in this department?
- What is your timeframe for making a hiring decision? (ask this last-it lets you know what to expect)

Questions NOT to ask the employer:

- How many sick days can I claim as a new employee?
- Do I have to dress up in the office?
- How much will I be paid? (Salary questions should be asked after the job offer)

Keep in mind body language, mannerisms and appearance can help portray a professional image.

- Be enthusiastic and positive – smile, sit up straight, and exude confidence.
- Let the employer know that you are interested in the job.
- Keep your answers as concise as possible and stick to the point.
- Dress professionally! Wear business attire (even if the organization is business casual).
- Bring a copy of your resume and references.
- Arrive 10 minutes early.

### **Be prepared for the HARDEST question - "Tell me about yourself."**

This is a difficult question to address since it is so open ended. Give some thought to what you want to share up front. Do not start from the beginning of your life (i.e. "I was born in Cincinnati..."). Keep in mind that all information should be connected to "why they should hire you." Your response should not exceed 2 minutes. Practice this question as it is often asked at the beginning when you are most nervous.

### **Review common interview questions**

It is impossible to prepare for every potential question. But reviewing common questions and verbally responding to them can help you focus and increase your confidence level. Remember, every question is asking you the same thing, "Why should we hire you? Why are you the best candidate for this position?" Use that knowledge to help guide your responses.

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### *General questions include:*

- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why are you interested in a career in XYZ field/industry?
- What do you know about XYZ agency/organization?
- What makes you stand out from your peers?
- What would your classmates/professors/colleagues say about you if I asked them about your leadership style?
- What are your top 2-3 strengths and your top 2 areas in need of improvement?
- Where do you see yourself in 2-3 years?...in 5 years?

### *Education based questions:*

- Why did you pursue your graduate degree in social work?
- Why did you choose Columbia?
- What skills did you develop through your education? How will these help you in a job?
- What was the most important thing you have learned in your graduate program?

### *Career focused questions:*

- Describe a previous work experience you really enjoyed & explain what you liked about it.
- Describe a previous work experience you really disliked and explain why you disliked it.
- In past jobs, what achievements were recognized by your supervisor?
- Can you recall a time when your work was criticized? Describe the situation and your response.
- Describe your ideal work environment.
- In previous work positions (part-time, volunteer or summer), did you initiate any new procedures, systems, programs, or activities?

### **Prepare yourself for Behavioral Questions**

Behavioral questions are increasingly popular. You can recognize them by the wording- "tell me about a time when you... or give me an example of an instance where you..." Behavioral questions are based on the rationale that past behavior can serve as a predictor of future behavior. You cannot prepare for every hypothetical behavioral question, but common themes of questions are included below:

#### *Difficult situations:*

- Tell me about a difficult problem you had to solve.
- Describe a time when you had to handle a difficult client.

#### *Adaptability:*

- Can you provide me with an example of a time when you had to deal with a big change?

#### *Analytical Skills:*

- Tell me about a strategic plan you helped develop.

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### *Oral & Written Communication Skills:*

- Give me an example of a time when you had to speak up in order to get a point across that was important to you.

### *Decision Making Skills:*

- What was the most difficult decision you had to make in the last six months?

### *Flexibility:*

- Describe a situation when you had to work with someone.

### *Initiative:*

- Give me an example of a project/task that you started on your own.

### *Organizational Skills:*

- Give me an example of where planning paid off.

### *Persuasiveness:*

- Can you think of a time when you had to persuade someone to change her/his mind?

### *Teamwork:*

- Describe a time when a team member strongly disagreed with your ideas or actions. How did you handle the situation?

## ◆ **SEALING THE DEAL: ACCEPTING, DECLINING & NEGOTIATING OFFERS**

Congratulations - you have survived the interview process and received a job offer. Remember, once an offer is presented an employer will give you time to consider the offer and make a decision. The time an employer provides varies greatly and can range from 24 hours to 2 weeks. Accepting a job offer is a significant decision so make sure you consider the following:

### *Research Salary Prior to Negotiation:*

- Know Your Market Value – what you can expect for the type of position you seek in comparison with your experience, education and the industry wage standards in the city/state that you reside in.
- Be realistic - your compensation level should be based on your professional worth, *not* your financial needs.
- Review job listings which indicate salaries for related positions.
- Talk to fellow students, alumni, friends and networking contacts.
- Review business and trade periodicals.
- Check out on-line salary and cost of living calculators ([www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com)).
- Review the collection of salary survey info. on NASW.

### *Determine your Needs:*

It is essential to figure out the minimum salary you would need to make ends meet. You should consider: credit card debt, cost of living, entertainment, rent/mortgage, student loans, car payment and insurance payments. This should not be presented as part of a salary negotiation but important for you to know as you consider any job offer.

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### *Is the Salary Negotiable?*

- The degree to which a salary is negotiable depends on the position, the organization, and your perceived value.
- Some positions have set salaries with limited negotiation room. If the position is part of a labor union the salary may be set.
- If the same figure is offered after asking for more, it probably is the last offer. In that case, you can ask for a salary review in six months to evaluate your performance and value, or you can turn the job down, asking that they keep you in mind for future openings.
- General rule: *The higher the position, the more qualified you are, the greater the level for negotiation.*

### *Factors to Consider:*

- Take time to outline the most important components of your ideal job.
- Assess the job offer in terms of your needs, benefits, and long-term career and life goals, and make a list of the pros and cons of the job.
- What is the potential lifestyle value and impact of the salary offered?
- Does the organization have a reputation for career advancement.
- Will working for the organization increase your long-term value.
- If your goal is to get your LCSW, make sure the position offers appropriate supervision.
- Also consider the employee benefit plan when evaluating an offer. Typical full-time employee benefits include: medical insurance (dental, and vision optional), retirement plans – 401k, 403b, pensions, life and disability insurance, paid vacation, sick time, and holidays.

### *Accepting an Offer:*

- When you reach an agreement, verbally confirm your acceptance of the offer and request the agreement in writing.
- Follow up with written confirmation letter or email which reiterates salary, start date, and position title.
- Accepting a job offer ethically obligates you to cease job search efforts and to notify other prospective employers that you must withdraw your name from their consideration.

### *Declining an Offer:*

- Let the interviewer know that if there is another opportunity that can meet your salary requirements you would be interested.
- Find out if there are, or might be, other openings they could suggest or other persons you could contact.

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#### *When You Don't Get an Offer:*

- Thank the employer for their time and interest. Reemphasize the fact that if future openings occur, you would be interested.
- Often the person selected ends up turning the job down. Keep the communication line open, positive, and professional. This keeps your name in their mind for the next opening or future opportunities.
- Learn from the experience.
- Keep trying!! Stay in control of your job search.

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### ◆ THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Acting like a professional in the workplace is vital to career advancement. The following article by Dr. Carol Fleming, a career coach and speech pathologist, who helps individuals with their professional skills outlines the major guidelines for professionalism.

#### **1. Own Your Job**

Take your job very seriously, as if you were in "business" for yourself. Personal pride in a job - any job - will be evident. As they say in the theater world, "There are no small parts, only small players". You will want to be punctual, have a clean work space and handle your work without complaint. Don't just do the job as a solo performance. All the people and processes that are related to your work are opportunities for you to expand your awareness and usefulness. Areas of interface are areas for new learning. This expands your "turf" and tells the world that you are serious about your job.

#### **2. Join the Team**

Make the effort to be familiar with the culture and history where you are employed: the important people, the times of disaster or triumph, the pending decisions, the mission statement, etc. You will get farther, faster, if you consider yourself part of a group with a common goal, not just one little person doing a particular job. Team feeling leads to cooperation and a collegial atmosphere. Make the effort to establish and maintain good communication with the people around you, because this will keep you in the loop of information flow. You want that. Do your share (at least) of the minor chores that occur in any job: Did you take the last cup of coffee? Make the next pot. Use the last paper clip? Get another box. Make a bit of a mess with office supplies, merchandise, etc.? Clean up after yourself. When it's time to collect for a birthday present, or to contribute to the office potluck, by all means be sure and participate. Be sure to show up at official functions and try to make as many contacts as you can.

#### **3. Leave your Personal Life at Home**

When you're on the job, show that you identify with the demands and issues of your organization. You are serious about this and keep your conversations within the boundaries of the work as much as possible. This demonstrates to people your commitment to the work and to your employer. You'll want to cultivate some privacy about your own domestic issues. Be very selective about what you reveal to co-workers. Some people tend to build friendships through shared personal difficulties. But, you do not want to be perceived as a person who doesn't have your life under control. And don't forget that conversations are easily overheard in elevators, cubicles and lunchrooms. Keep your personal revelations generally positive.

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### **4. Keep Your Cool**

How you handle anger is, perhaps, the most telling indication of your maturity. This includes anger directed at you as well as your own emotional reactions. The display of anger is the most upsetting behavior there is and it constitutes an emergency in human relations. The workplace is absolutely no place for anger, so skills for dealing with it in a calming and constructive manner are valuable. You want to present a consistent emotional tone. Extreme fluctuations of any kind are perceived as unprofessional or immature. Dramatics, hysterics, loud or wild laughter, and yes, tears, are not appropriate in the workplace.

### **5. Look the Part**

Observe the personal appearance of your co-workers and supervisors and determine the 'dress code' in your workplace. You not only want to fit in, you want your appearance to reflect well on your employer. This does not mean that you give up all personal style. It does mean that you demonstrate a willingness to blend with the group. Appearance is much more than wearing a well fitting suit. Be alert for details.

\* A good rule of thumb is dress like your supervisor's boss.

### **6. Be a Positive Force**

Criticizing and complaining are the worst things you can do. Contrary to your motivation, it simply makes you look bad. We need very little help in detecting faults in conditions and in each other. What we do need is support of individuals and solutions to problems. Be a solver rather than a complainer. Try to be for things (rather than against something). It puts you in a positive light and protects you from being perceived as critical. Are you approachable? You want to be easy to access so that people won't leave you out of the loop of information and friendliness. Check yourself for the following behavior:

- \* make eye contact
- \* smile and acknowledge people when you first see them
- \* when people talk to you, look at them and give them your attention
- \* respond to people with a nod, an answer – whatever is appropriate

### **7. Mind your Old-fashioned Manners**

Nothing is more quickly noted and appreciated than courtesy. Learn the standards of good manners appropriate to your setting and practice them with everybody, not just the people you're trying to impress. Make this a part of your own personal integrity. Be reminded that you should always use the formal mode of greeting until told to do otherwise. The client is "Mrs. Brown" until she says, "Just call me Grace!". Appreciation is in short supply; don't add to the deficit. Say your 'thank yous' with sincerity if you want people to continue to do nice things for you.

# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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Get comfortable with introductions and know how to do it properly. People can really get offended when this social gesture is ignored. Don't be shy about introducing yourself; not only that - don't be shy about reintroducing yourself. All of us forget names. If you can get yourself someone in a mentor role, you might give them permission to point out any of the 'little things' in your behavior that might get in your way to the top.

### **8. Develop Strong Communication Skills**

If people ask you to repeat frequently, or if there are just too many misunderstandings from your interactions, this is pretty clear feedback that your speech may not be clear enough for professional standards. Get an objective evaluation and do the work that will make you a clear communicator. People are incredibly skilled in reading your attitude. If you have resentments, or if you have respect, be assured that it will be communicated and received and reacted to, by other people.

There is also an art to voice-mail. Make it your ambition to reduce "phone tag" by getting in the habit of leaving clear and well thought out messages so that the person can respond to your message, not just return your call.

Good conversational skills will bring you into comfortable contact with new customers, leads, jobs and friends and you will be grateful for this fluency for the rest of your life. Comfortable small talk develops new professional relationships, and it also makes you more at ease at the water cooler, at office parties and when it's up to you to 'melt the social ice' in any social situation. Small talk is one of the most subtle and under- appreciated social skills. All prominent people are very good at it.

Finally, written communication can (and will) be scrutinized, so don't let your guard down when writing memos, signing documents and leaving e-mail messages. This may be the only contact people have with you. A misspelled name, a scrawl, the evident lack of care will lose you credibility and respect. Clarity and accuracy are especially important when dealing with official documents, but everybody appreciates a written message that is easy to read, gets to the point and doesn't distract attention with errors.

# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

### ◆ **LMSW & LCSW INFORMATION**

#### **Importance of Licensing**

- Licensing is a matter of LAW
- The law defines the practice of Licensed Master Social Work as the “professional application of social work theory, principles, and methods to address mental, social, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive disorders, conditions and disabilities and psychosocial aspects of illness and injury.”
- Licensing confers privileges and carries with it responsibilities:
  - Consumer Protection: Licensing enhances the quality of services to consumers by requiring specific education and supervised experience.
  - Legal Definition: There is now in State law a legal definition of what professional social work is.
  - Almost all states have licensure: NYS is the 49th state to license social work. Each state has its own licensure with its own requirements.
  - Private Practice Restriction: Only those with qualifying education, experience, and supervision can do private practice without oversight supervision.
  - Provides greater clarity: It is now defined in state law what are the practices of Licensed Master Social Work and Licensed Clinical Social Work.

#### **LMSW Scope of Practice**

- LMSWs work with: Individuals. Couples, Families, Groups, Communities Organizations and Society.
- LMSWs provide all forms of supervision except for the supervision of the practice of Licensed Clinical Social Work.
- LMSWs may practice Licensed Clinical Social Work under the supervision of an LCSW, a licensed psychologist, or a psychiatrist.

#### **LCSW Scope of Practice**

- The LCSW is not a better license than the LMSW, it is a *different* license.
- Only LCSWs can provide, without supervision: psychotherapy, assessment-based treatment planning, diagnoses
- LMSWs can provide the above, as long as they are under supervision of an LCSW, licensed psychologist or psychiatrist.
- LCSW is needed for: private practice, supervising LMSWs towards their LCSW, reimbursement at mental health clinics or fee-for-service clinics.

#### **License Reciprocity in NYS**

- New York State has no reciprocity. Social workers from other states must apply for licensure in New York State.
- You may not have to take an exam if you previously passed one in another state given by the ASWB.

# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

### Steps to Obtaining the LMSW in NY State

#### STEP 1: Be or Have:

- MSW
- 21 Years of Age
- Good Moral Character
- Completed Approved Child Abuse ID and Reporting Course

#### STEP 2: Send to New York State Education Department (NYSED)

\* All forms are available at: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/lmswforms.htm>

- The LMSW application form (Form 1)
- Proof of Child Abuse Training
- The fee of \$280 (includes \$125 for license plus \$155 for first 3 year registration)
- CUSSW must verify your receipt of the Master of Science in Social Work. Bring Certification of Professional Education Form 2 with your information filled out to Betty Gee in Room 531. She will send to NYSED.

#### STEP 3: NYSED notifies the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) and the applicant via a letter when he/she is eligible to register for the LMSW test.

- It takes 2-3 weeks for applicant to receive this letter.
- Letter includes toll-free number and code for next step.
- NOTE: You must take the exam within one year of receiving this letter or you will have to reapply (and pay again!)

#### STEP 4: Register/Take LMSW Exam

- Register to take exam with ASWB, [www.aswb.com](http://www.aswb.com)
  - Toll-free number 1-888-5SW-EXAM
  - Pay \$175.00 exam fee
- Wait for ASWB to send you an authorization by email or regular mail (depending on registration method) which you will have to bring to the exam site.
- Exams are administered by appointment at [ACT test centers](#) throughout the U.S. There are no fixed administration dates; instead, registered candidates schedule a time to take the test at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).
- Take exam

### Steps to Obtaining the LCSW in NY State

#### STEP 1: Education, Experience & Supervision Requirements

- Must have taken 12 credits of clinical coursework.
- Experience: Must have 3 years of full-time (20 client contact hours/week) or part-time – up to 6 years – of part time (not less than 10 client contact hours/week) providing diagnosis, assessment-based treatment planning, and psychotherapy with appropriate supervision.

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- Supervisor must be an LCSW, a licensed psychologist, or a psychiatrist. Make sure to keep your supervisors' contact information current! Qualifying supervision: Must have one hour of face-to-face supervision weekly or two hours biweekly on diagnosis, assessment-based treatment planning, and psychotherapy. At least 2 hours/month must be individual supervision; the rest can be group.

### The Exam

- The exam is given nationally.
- Currently, there about 8 different versions in use.
- Candidates can retake the exam after 90 days if he/she does not pass.
- There is no limit on the number of times you can retake exam however you must pay \$175.00 each time.
- You must take exam within 1 year of ASWB eligibility or reapply.
- Candidates have 4 hours to complete the test, which is administered electronically on a touch-screen.
- There are no "formal" breaks - once you start exam the clock keeps ticking.
- Each examination contains 170 four-option multiple choice questions designed to measure minimum competencies at four categories of practice. Only 150 of the 170 items are scored. The remaining 20 questions are "pretest" items included to measure their effectiveness as items on future examinations. These pretest items are scattered randomly throughout the examination.
- In NYS a passing score is 75. This is a scaled, not an absolute, score.
- There is no penalty for guessing so don't skip questions.
- There are two important aspects to passing the exam: Knowing content for questions & practicing exam taking skills.
- Special accommodations are available for candidates with disabilities.

### Exam Preparation Resources

- The Office of Career & Leadership Development has *Comprehensive Study Guides* that students can borrow for a maximum of 5 days.
- NASW  
<http://www.naswnys.org/swprep.htm>  
[http://www.naswnys.org/licensurre\\_faqs.htm](http://www.naswnys.org/licensurre_faqs.htm)
- JBFCs offers a fairly comprehensive course:  
[http://www.seliginstitute.org/course\\_swelss.html](http://www.seliginstitute.org/course_swelss.html)
- LEAP: Licensing Exam Preparation Services  
[www.licensingprep.com](http://www.licensingprep.com)
- Social Work Examination Services  
[www.swes.net](http://www.swes.net)
- Private tutoring by CUSSW alum –  
Rebecca Hanus: [becca62@gmail.com](mailto:becca62@gmail.com)

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### **Limited Permits**

NYSED may approve a Limited Permit application if all the requirements are satisfied except the exam. If you have met the education requirement for licensure as an LMSW but are waiting to pass the examination, you must apply for a limited permit (Form 5) and pay the fee (\$70), in addition to the application and fee for licensure, in order to practice licensed master social work prior to passing the examination. This permits a candidate to perform the tasks of an "LMSW" or "LCSW" at an agency if all but the exam is missing, as long as appropriately supervised.

#### Note:

- The limited permit is valid for one year and may not be renewed.
- You can only apply for a limited permit one time in your career.
- The limited permit is specific to the site you are working at.
- You must complete the two-hour Department approved course in the identification and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect or file an exemption using Form 1CE (available on the web) before a permit or license will be issued.
- You must be under the general supervision of an LMSW or LCSW, who is in the same facility and accessible to you.
- You can take the ASWB examination every 90 days if you do not pass the first time. If you are at risk of losing your job, the ASWB will waive the 90-day waiting period upon written request.
- If you have not passed the exam when the limited permit expires you may not practice as a licensed master social worker unless you work in an exempt setting.

### **Important Contact Information**

#### **National Association of Social Workers** - New York City Chapter

- [www.naswnyc.org](http://www.naswnyc.org)
- [www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)
- Lu Lasson, LCSW-R, Licensing Specialist: (212) 668-0050 ext. 221, [lasson@naswnyc.org](mailto:lasson@naswnyc.org)

**Association of Social Work Boards** - Information about requirements for licensure in other states can be found through links on the ASWB Web site at <http://www.aswb.org/SWL/statutesregulations.asp>

**New York State Office of the Professions** - Information and answers to frequent questions about applying for Social Work Licensure in New York State can be found at: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/>.

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### **NEW YORK STATE LMSW & LCSW INFORMATION** **QUESTIONS & FACTS**

#### **Are there activities that can be performed by an unlicensed social work?**

The Education Law defines certain activities that are within the scope of practice of the Licensed Master Social Worker, but may also be performed by an individual who is not licensed. The unlicensed person can not imply that he or she is licensed. If the services are provided by an LMSW or LCSW, the licensee can only engage in those activities in which he or she is competent.

Services that are defined as not requiring licensure include but are not limited to:

- a. Serve as a community organizer, planner, or administrator for social service programs in any setting.
- b. Provide supervision and/or consultation to individuals, groups, institutions and agencies, other than the supervision of a LMSW or LCSW established under Title VIII of the Education Law.
- c. Serve as a faculty member or instructor in an educational setting.
- d. Plan and/or conduct research projects and program evaluation studies.
- e. Maintain familiarity with both professional and self-help systems in the community in order to assist the client in those services when necessary.
- f. Assist individuals or groups with difficult day to day problems such as finding employment, locating sources of assistance, organizing community groups to work on a specific problem.
- g. Consult with other agencies on problems and cases served in common and coordinating services among agencies or providing case management.
- h. Conduct data gathering on social problems.
- i. Serve as an advocate for those clients or groups of clients whose needs are not being met by available programs or by a specific agency.
- j. Assess, evaluate and formulate a plan of action based on client need.
- k. Provide training to community groups, agencies, and other professionals.
- l. Provide administrative supervision but not supervise or direct professional practice of an LMSW or LCSW.

# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

### **What is the LMSW?**

LMSW stands for Licensed Master Social Worker. In New York State, the practice of licensed master social work and the use of the title *Licensed Master Social Worker* or *LMSW* requires professional licensure. The law defines the practice of Licensed Master Social Work as the “professional application of social work theory, principles, and methods to address mental, social, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive disorders, conditions and disabilities and psychosocial aspects of illness and injury.” LMSW's engage in many various professional responsibilities including social work advocacy, case management, counseling, consultation, research, teaching, administration and management and the administration of tests and measures of psychosocial functioning.

### **What is the LCSW?**

LCSW stands for Licensed Clinical Social Worker. The practice of licensed clinical social work encompasses the scope of practice of licensed master social work and, in addition, includes the diagnosis of mental, emotional, behavioral, addictive and developmental disorders and disabilities and of the psychosocial aspects of illness, injury, disability and impairment undertaken within a psychosocial framework; administration and interpretation of tests and measures of psychosocial functioning; development and implementation of appropriate assessment-based treatment plans; and the provision of crisis oriented psychotherapy and brief, short-term and long-term psychotherapy and psychotherapeutic treatment to individuals, couples, families and groups, habilitation, psychoanalysis and behavior therapy; all undertaken for the purpose of preventing, assessing, treating, ameliorating and resolving psychosocial dysfunction with the goal of maintaining and enhancing the mental, emotional, behavioral and social functioning and well-being of individuals, couples, families, small groups, organizations, communities and society.

### **What is the difference between the LMSW and the LCSW?**

The Education Law defines the practice as a Licensed Master Social Worker and as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. A licensee may only engage in those activities that are within the scope of practice and in which the licensee is competent. The major difference between the two is that the LMSW may only provide "clinical social work" services (diagnosis, psychotherapy, and assessment-based treatment planning) under supervision; the LCSW may provide those services without supervision.

# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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### **How does the Education Law define diagnosis, psychotherapy and assessment based treatment planning?**

- **Diagnosis:** Diagnosis in the context of licensed clinical social work practice is the process of distinguishing, beyond general social work assessment, between similar mental, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive disorders, impairments and disabilities within a psychosocial framework on the basis of their similar and unique characteristics consistent with accepted classification systems.
- **Psychotherapy:** Psychotherapy in the context of licensed clinical social work practice is the use of verbal methods in interpersonal relationships with the intent of assisting a person or persons to modify attitudes and behavior which are intellectually, socially, or emotionally maladaptive.
- **Assessment-based treatment plans:** Development of assessment-based treatment plans in the context of licensed clinical social work practice refers to the development of an integrated plan of prioritized interventions, that is based on the diagnosis and psychosocial assessment of the client, to address mental, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive disorders, impairments and disabilities, reactions to illnesses, injuries, disabilities and impairments, and social problems.

### **If I am not going to providing psychotherapy, assessment-based treatment planning and diagnoses, should I still get my LMSW?**

Yes, professional licensing is important because it confers privileges and carries with it responsibilities including

- **Consumer Protection:** Licensing enhances the quality of services to consumers by requiring specific education and supervised experience.
- **Legal Definition:** There is now in State law a legal definition of what professional social work is.
- **Almost all states have licensure:** NYS is the 49th state to license social work. Each state has its own licensure with its own requirements.
- **Private Practice Restriction:** Only those with qualifying education, experience, and supervision can do private practice without oversight supervision.
- **Provides greater clarity:** It is now defined in state law what are the practices of Licensed Master Social Work and Licensed Clinical Social Work.

### **Can a LMSW operate a private practice?**

No, New York law does not allow an LMSW to establish a private practice or professional entity for the purpose of providing "clinical social work services". A LMSW may form a legal business entity, including a private practice and provide any services defined as within the scope of practice of Licensed Master Social Work as outlined by Education Law Section 7701.

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**Do I have to be licensed as an LMSW in order to become an LCSW in New York?** Yes, in order to complete the supervised experience in diagnosis and psychotherapy required for licensure as an LCSW you must be licensed and registered to practice as a LMSW, or hold a limited permit to practice under supervision, or be practicing in an exempt setting, as defined in the Education Law.

### **What is acceptable clinical social work experience for licensure as an LCSW?**

An applicant for licensure as an LCSW must complete 3 years of full-time or the part-time equivalent (in no more than six years) supervised, post-degree experience in diagnosis, psychotherapy, and assessment-based treatment plans, acceptable to the Department.

Full-time experience is defined as no more than 20 client contact hours in psychotherapy each week; part time experience must not be less than 10 client contact hours in each setting per week. Part-time experience is pro-rated (e.g.,  $15/20 = 0.75$ ) so that the applicant will require more than three years to complete the equivalent of 36 months of supervised experience. Experience of less than 10 client contact hours per week is not acceptable for licensure. In short, you must have a minimum of 2,880 client contact hours obtained in 3-6 year period. A client contact hour is a session of at least 45 minutes using verbal methods in interpersonal relationships to assist a person or persons to modify attitudes and behavior which are intellectually, socially, or emotionally maladaptive.

### **Is there a list of LCSW-qualified settings?**

There is no definitive list of LCSW-qualifying settings because final decision rests with NYSED. Keep in mind, that as frustrating as it is there are often inconsistencies in this qualifying process. Some preventative programs are qualified while others are not. In addition, some applicants have had their clinical experience accepted while colleagues working in the same agency have been denied. Also, the state will not tell a job seeker whether a position "counts" toward the clinical hours. They do however realize that this is a huge problem and are supposedly working on a solution.

### **What makes an agency or setting LCSW-qualified?**

The work must comprise psychotherapy, assessment-based treatment-planning, and differential diagnosis (using DMS differentials) provided in 30 or 45 minute sessions. The setting must be authorized to provide psychotherapy, assessment-based treatment-planning, and differential diagnosis. These settings are usually authorized by the OHM (Office of Mental Health Professions), OASAS (Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services) or OMRDD (Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities).

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You can also ask the following “rule of thumb” questions:

1. If a client needs mental health services are they referred out or assigned to me? *If they are referred out then the agency is probably not LCSW qualifying*
2. If they are assigned to me if there an agency-hired LCSW, licensed psychologist or psychiatrist to supervise me? *It would be extremely unlikely for a LCSW qualifying job not to provide supervision.*
3. In any given week am I typically having at least 10 psychotherapy sessions? *The answer should be Yes*
4. What is the rest of my non-psychotherapy time spent doing? *If you are hired to provide psychotherapy in an authorized setting, you will probably not be doing much else, such as case management, outreach, etc.*

#### **If I provide case management, school social work, discharge planning, counseling, and client advocacy can I qualify for licensure as an LCSW?**

No. These services constitute direct practice with clients but do not meet the experience requirements for the LCSW.

#### **What is acceptable supervision in the practice of clinical social work?**

Qualified supervisors are LCSWs, licensed psychologists and psychiatrists - no other professions are allowed to supervise. The supervisor must have been licensed before starting to supervise you. The supervising psychologist must be qualified in psychotherapy as determined by the State Board; the psychologist must submit Form 4Q to verify experience and training. The supervisor must be hired by the agency/organization you are working for.

The supervisor must provide the supervisee one hour per week or two hours every other week of individual or group supervision in diagnosis, psychotherapy and assessment-based treatment planning. At least two hours per month must be individual supervision. The supervisor must be apprised of the diagnosis and treatment of each client, discuss the applicant's cases, provide the applicant with oversight and guidance in diagnosing and treating clients, and regularly review and evaluate the applicant's professional work.

If the applicant is practicing less than full-time (10 client contact hours per week), the applicant must still receive one hour of supervision every week or two hours of supervision every other week for the entire period.

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#### **If my employer does not provide a qualified supervisor, can I contract with a qualified supervisor outside the agency for private supervision?**

Yes, In order to ensure appropriate protection of client information under federal and state laws, there should be a 3-way agreement between you, the proposed supervisor, and your employer. Since your agency or employer is responsible for the services provided to each client, you may not share information-including patient records, diagnosis and treatment of the patient, or access to the patient-without the permission of your employer or agency. The minimum information in such a letter of agreement would include:

- Acknowledgement that third-party supervision will be provided to allow the applicant to develop skills and abilities in the practice of the profession;
- Acknowledgement that the supervisor will be provided with access to patient records and, if appropriate, to the patients to conduct joint intake or treatment sessions;
- Acknowledgement that the patient will be informed that the applicant is authorized to practice only under supervision and that patient-specific information is shared with a third-party supervisor;
- Acknowledgement that the patient will be informed of the supervisor's name and contact information or an agency contact to whom questions about the applicant's practice may be addressed;
- Assurance that supervision will be of the duration and frequency specified in regulations and continue until the applicant is licensed or ceases practice; and
- Arrangements for paying the supervisor that identify who is responsible for making the payment (i.e. the applicant, employer or both).

#### **How can I verify my supervised experience in diagnosis and psychotherapy?**

All post-degree experience must be submitted on Department forms and include:

- The beginning and ending dates of the supervised experience;
- The average weekly client contact hours in diagnosis and psychotherapy;
- The supervisor's qualifications to practice diagnosis and psychotherapy;
- The duration and frequency of individual and group supervision; and
- Notarized signature of the supervisor.

The forms must bear original signatures and must be submitted by the supervisor, not the applicant, directly to the Department. If you are changing supervisors or leaving an agency, you may wish to have the experience documented and submitted at that time.

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If your supervisor is deceased or unavailable, you, a licensed colleague or the agency may provide the required information (beginning and ending dates; weekly client contact hours; supervisor's qualifications; and duration and frequency of supervision). A licensed colleague who is familiar with your supervised experience may attest that you met the requirements; the forms are available at <http://www.op.nysed.gov/lcswforms.htm>.

#### **I have many years of experience in social work, including credentials and licensure in other states. Is there reciprocity or any way my qualifications can substitute for the requirements in New York?**

There is no reciprocity for a professional license as an LMSW or LCSW. An applicant must meet the requirements for graduate education, including specific course work and internship and examination. And for the LCSW, the requirements for supervised experience in diagnosis and psychotherapy, as established in the Education Law.

In order to provide professional services in New York, you must be licensed and registered to practice in New York. Licensure in another state does not authorize you to practice in New York whether services are provided in-person, by telephone, over the Internet, or any other format. However, if you took the LMSW or LCSW exam given by the ASWB and passed you may not have to retake it.

#### **How can I become a school social worker in New York?**

An individual practicing licensed master social work in a public school or pre-school must be certified by the Office of Teaching (OT) in the Department. OT will issue a provisional school social worker certificate to an individual who has an acceptable MSW degree. The provisional certificate is valid for five years by which time the certificate holder must be licensed as an LMSW or LCSW to receive the permanent school social worker certificate. You can access more information about the school social worker certificate on-line at: [www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/contact.htm](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/contact.htm) and can file an on-line application for the school certificate.

#### **I have never done well on multiple-choice tests and want to know if I can be licensed without having to pass an examination?**

No. The Education Law requires an applicant for the LMSW or the LCSW to pass an examination acceptable to the Department. It has been determined that an applicant can meet these requirements by passing the appropriate examination offered by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB). A candidate for the LMSW must pass the ASWB Masters examination and a candidate for the LCSW must pass the ASWB Clinical examination. Note: NY does not recognize the ASWB Advanced Generalist examination for licensure as an LMSW or LCSW.

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#### **I am licensed as an LMSW and as an LCSW. I received a renewal notice for my LMSW but my LCSW is still valid, what should I do?**

If you were licensed as a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) on or after September 1, 2004 and were later licensed as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), you hold separate licenses with different registration dates. Since the practice of Licensed Clinical Social Work encompasses the practice of Licensed Master Social Work, you do not need to maintain your registration as an LMSW. When you receive the LMSW registration form, you can respond "NO" on Question 1, which asks if you would like to register the LMSW license to practice for the upcoming period. You should then answer all other questions, sign and date the form, and return it with no fee to the Department in the envelope provided. The registration of your LMSW license will then be put in "Inactive" status and the Office of the Professions [online license verification](#) will reflect that status.

#### **Who is exempt from licensure?**

An MSW who was doing clinical work on September 1, 2004 may continue to so do unlicensed as long as s/he is performing the exact same functions at the exact same program.

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### ◆ **OTHER HELPFUL “TIP SHEETS” AND POWERPOINTS**

Available in the Office of Career Development

- Applying to a Doctoral Program
- Career Options for Social Workers
- Career Resources for Students with Disabilities
- Deciding on a Doctoral Program
- Fellowships & Internships
- Helpful Job Websites
- Informational Interviews
- Interview Questions
- Interviewing for International Students
- Introduction: The Office of Career & Leadership Development
- Japanese Resumes
- Licensing in New Jersey
- Licensing in California
- Long Distance Job Search
- Power Verbs
- Programs in the Government: Presidential Management Fellowship & Emerging Leaders Program
- Resume Writing for International Students
- Social Work Opportunities in Washington DC
- Using *eRecruiting*: CUSSW Online Career Site
- Social Work Careers in Washington DC
- Writing a CV

### ◆ **CAREER DEVELOPMENT LIBRARY**

The Office of Career & Leadership Development has a small library of career books in Room 525 that cover a range of career related topics including Networking, International Careers, Resumes, etc. These books can be signed out on loan for a maximum of 3 days.

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◆ **PERSONAL CAREER PLANNING WORKSHEET**

**SELF ASSESSMENT**

View yourself from a professional perspective and clarify your VIPS.

1. What are your values and lifestyle preferences? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What are your interests or objectives/goals? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What are your personal qualities, strengths, weaknesses, traits? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What are your skills & knowledge to date? \_\_\_\_\_

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# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

### **DEVELOP MARKETING TOOLS**

Build your networking plan.

1. Create your elevator speech (*Summarize your experiences and goals into a 1-2 minutes introduction*).

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2. List of contacts to network with (*start with five*):

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

3. List of professional associations/organizations:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. List of events or career/job fairs:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

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**RESEARCH**

Research the social work domain.

1. List industries you are interested in:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. List demographics you are interested in:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

3. List organizations you are interested in:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

4. List jobs with skills/functions you are interested in:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Salary range required: \_\_\_\_\_

CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT  
A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

Sample Resume - #1

**Paper** – resume should be printed on white or off white bond paper

**Font** - should be a classic font like Times New Roman or Arial and font size should be between 10 & 12 pt

**MARY DIAZ**  
880 West 100<sup>th</sup> Street, #3C  
New York, NY 10025  
mobile: (212) 280-8090  
mc100@columbia.edu

**Margins** - should be between .5- 1” all around

**EDUCATION**

**Columbia University School of Social Work, New York, NY**

*Master of Science in Social Work, expected May 2010*

Concentration: Advanced Generalist Program & Planning; Health, Mental Health & Disabilities

**Barnard College, New York, NY**

*Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, May 2005*

Graduated cum laude, Dean’s List (2002-2004)

**Spacing** – double space between categories & listings

**LANGUAGE:** Bilingual English and Spanish

**Verbs**– descriptive verbs for past jobs should be conjugated in the past tense

**EXPERIENCE**

**PATHWAYS, Bronx, NY**

*Program Manager, December 2006-August 2008*

*A community agency that provides resources and services to areas residents.*

- Evaluated five of the agency’s programs, wrote outline of findings and presented to Executive Director and management staff
- Independently developed two new programs focused on mental health services for clients
- Managed and maintained database for tracking client information and services
- Provided informal counseling, support and crisis intervention to clients
- Prepared monthly report for Executive Director to track and monitor all programs
- Interfaced with community organizations, early childhood programs and schools to enhance the flow of information and resources

**Bold** – important information that you want to highlight including employer names

**THE HELP PROJECT, MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINE, Brooklyn, NY**

*Volunteer Coordinator, July 2005-December 2006*

- Recruited, trained and supervised ten volunteers providing support for hotline clients
- Designed and implemented an adolescent suicide hotline program staffed by volunteers
- Provided support for clients in crisis
- Conducted outreach in community to market services of The Help Project

**HUNTER PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT, New York, NY**

*Research Assistant for Professor Susan Casper, September 2003-May 2005*

- Conducted literature review
- Collected data and entered data using SPSS
- Analyzed data for study on child abuse

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A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

**MARY DIAZ, page 2**

Include name and page #  
on second page

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

**OAKS NURSING HOME, Brooklyn, NY, 2004-present**

Volunteer

- Develop and facilitate activities for residents
- Maintain database on outside resources for social activities

**LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

**Barnard College, New York, NY, 2002-2005**

Latino Student Group

**Barnard College** New York, NY, 2004-2005

Conference on Children & Mental Health, Co-Facilitator

**Skills:** Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, SPSS

*References Available upon Request*

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A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

◆ **Sample Resume - #2**

## **Pat Cooper**

---

123 Main Street, Apt #1, New York, NY 10027 • abc123@columbia.edu • (917) 555-5555

### **SUMMARY**

Experienced program specialist interested in community development and training. Strong innovation, analytic, and organizational skills and proven program management ability. Background in homeless services that includes database management, qualitative and quantitative analysis, program development and direct practice. Comfortable in fast-paced environment, and effective working independently or as a member of a team.

### **EDUCATION**

**Columbia University School of Social Work**, New York, NY

Master of Science, Social Work, Expected May 2010

Concentration: Social Policy and Practice

*Relevant Coursework:* Seminar on Social Policy I and II, Microeconomics and Policy Analysis I and II, Legal Foundations in Policy II, Social Welfare Policy

**Columbia University**, New York, NY

Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, Minor in Social Work, May 2005

### **COMPUTER SKILLS**

Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and SPSS

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**The City of New York, Department of Homeless Services, New York, NY**

**Social Work Intern, Policy and Planning: Management Analysis**, Sept 2008-May 2009

- Researched how changes in macroeconomic factors such as rates of unemployment and poverty affect the New York City shelter population
- Performed a data match analysis of foreclosure filings in the area upon entering shelter to track the impact of housing foreclosures on shelter entry.
- Managed case record reviews of individuals that were found shelter ineligible due to non-cooperation to inform improved management practices
- Conducted data analysis concerning clients' borough of origin and length of stay in shelter using DHS' Family Client Tracking System (CTS) and SPSS
- Produced DHS' Daily Census Report of individuals in shelter and maintained spreadsheets of data that informed public reports and media requests
- Presented research and data analysis findings to the Commissioner of DHS and his administrative staff, and participated in bi-weekly work group meetings

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**Pat Cooper, Pg. 2**

**Council of Area Churches, Santa Monica, CA**

**Program Director, Feb 2006-May 2007**

- Issued emergency shelter vouchers and provided rental assistance to individuals that were homeless and individuals that were at risk of becoming homeless through eviction
- Maintained working relationships with associated social service agencies, local emergency shelters, the City of Santa Monica and the Santa Monica Continuum of Care
- Generated and presented regular reports to the City of Santa Monica and Los Angeles County on the grant progress and performance of our Emergency Shelter Programs
- Developed and implemented new methods of fundraising for Friends In Deed House
- Researched, wrote and secured grants for the Ecumenical Council of Santa Monica Area Churches to support their Emergency Shelter and Homeless Prevention Programs

**Homeless Prevention Program, Santa Monica, CA**

**Case Manager, May 2007- May 2008**

- Provided supplemental resources such as utility assistance, short term rental assistance, and clothing and food vouchers to households at risk of becoming homeless
- Engaged individuals that were low income and at risk of losing their housing in ongoing case management in an effort to prevent homelessness
- Implemented a successful neighborhood communication strategy that informed local households at risk of becoming homeless about the Santa Monica Homeless Prevention Program

**Bad Weather Shelter, Santa Monica, CA**

**Case Manager, Nov 2005-May 2007**

- Maintained and promoted interagency relationships in an effort to transition individuals out of homelessness
- Performed shelter intakes and entered the information into the Santa Monica HMIS computer data system
- Provided case management to individuals and families that were considered chronically homeless and service resistant

**Columbia University**

**Research Assistant, Psychology Lab, Oct 2001-May 2005**

- Administered surveys for a long term Cognitive Psychology experiment investigating possible affects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder on memory
- Scheduled participants and tracked their involvement in the study over a four year period
- Coded open-ended data into Excel and analyzed the information using SPSS

**LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

- Social Policy Caucus Member, 2008-2009
- Los Angeles Emergency Food and Shelter Local Board Member, 2006-2007
- Housing and Homeless Network Executive Committee Member, 2006-2007

# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

### ◆ Sample Resume - #3

#### **PAT COOPER**

123 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Apt. #1, New York, NY 10027

917-555-5555 ~ abc123@columbia.edu

#### **CAREER PROFILE**

Results-oriented, quality-driven professional with management and human resources experience overseeing social service programs. Strong track record of successfully creating, modifying, and expanding organizational initiatives while demonstrating high levels of fiscal responsibility.

#### ***Core Knowledge & Skill Areas:***

- Managing People Issues
- Budget Planning & Management
- Staff & Volunteer Development
- Resource Utilization
- Grant Writing & Fundraising
- Program Design & Evaluation
- Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives
- Training & Public Speaking

#### **EDUCATION**

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**, New York, NY

Master of Science in Social Work, Anticipated May 2010

Social Enterprise Administration – *GPA: 3.8*

**Related Course Work:** *Human Resources, Financial Management and Capacities as a Manager*

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY**, New York, NY

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, May 2004

*Cumulative GPA: 3.8 (High Honors Distinction)*

#### **NON-PROFIT EXPERIENCE**

**YMCA**, Queens, NY

2004 – Present

#### ***DIRECTOR of OUTREACH SERVICES***

*Managed organizational engagement with for-profits, community leaders, and other not-for-profit organizations with the aim of developing social service programs for underserved residents of color.*

- Revitalized outreach operation by devising a business strategy predicated on providing premium, needs-based programming for underserved residents of color.
- Slashed departmental expenses by 40% in a span of two years. Accomplished feat by introducing an aggressive volunteerism campaign to cut personnel costs, shedding underperforming programs, and creating more cost-effective program models.
- Conceived and oversaw Aspiring Entrepreneurs – a micro-enterprise program for teens of color. Selected enterprises generated \$15,000 for Outreach Department.

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**PAT COOPER**, *second page*

**HUMAN RESOURCES EXPERIENCE**

**BARNARD COLLEGE**, New York, NY 2008 - 2009

**INTERN - DISABILITY COORDINATOR**

*Assisted the Manager of Disability in troubleshooting Short-Term Disability and Workers Compensation resulting in a more efficient administration.*

- Closed 75 outstanding short-term disability claims in a span of three months; resulting in the College redeeming reimbursement payments from Disability Carrier.
- Helped devise an outreach business strategy to address the rising number of fines levied on the College by New York State Workers Compensation Board. Outreach efforts yielded a 35% reduction in fines versus prior month.
- Initiated and received approval to draft a manual underscoring State and College protocol for filing short-term disability claims. Measure drastically reduced claim inquiries and filing errors.
- Shadowed administrators from the Human Resources functions of Client Services, Work/Life, Recruitment, Labor Relations, and Learning & Development.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**STANFORD GRADUATE SCHOOL of BUSINESS**, Stanford, CA Summer 2007

**SUMMER INSTITUTE for GENERAL MANAGEMENT**

**Course Work:** *Non-Profit Management, Human Resources, Marketing, Accounting, Corporate Finance, Managerial Economics & Statistics, Negotiations, and Strategy*

**AWARDS & AFFILIATIONS**

Elected, Director of Activities for CUSSW Social Enterprise Administration Caucus  
Inductee, 2009 University Presidential Inaugural Conference  
Member, Blue Venture Community - Columbia Community for Entrepreneurship  
Member, National Association of Social Workers  
Honoree, National Dean's List (2000, 2002, 2003 and 2007)  
Honoree, 2004 New Jersey YMCA Minority Achiever

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◆ **Sample Resume - #4**

**PAT COOPER**

---

123 West 4th Street , #1 NY, NY 10027 - Phone: 212.555.5555 - Email: abc123@columbia.edu

**EDUCATION**

**Columbia University School of Social Work**

**Anticipated May 2010**

Master of Science in Social Work

**New York, NY**

- Concentration: Advanced Generalist Practice & Programming
- Field of Practice: International Social Welfare

**Vanderbilt University**

**May 2004**

Bachelor of Arts with Distinction

**Nashville, TN**

- Major: History
- Study Abroad: Ancient Greek History, Greece, Summer 2003

**Languages:** English, native ▪ Spanish, fluent

**EXPERIENCE**

**Water for All**

**Sept. 2008 – July 2009**

**Programming and Grant Management Intern**

**New York, NY**

- Review and analyze prospective grant applications from international nonprofit organizations applying to receive project funding from Water for All.
- Write and submit grant proposals for Water for All to solicit funding for organization costs.
- Maintain organization database and GPS coordinates of well sites on Google Earth.
- Created online version of organization Request For Proposal (RFP).

**Foundation ACCESS**

**May 2008 – Aug. 2008**

**Assistant to Executive Director**

**Quito, Ecuador**

- Translated organization website and informational brochures into English.
- Instituted electronic system of organization budget using Excel software.
- Designed online versions of all organization accounts and budgets.

**Sunset Park Family Support Center**

**Sept. 2007 – May 2008**

**Supportive Counselor Intern**

**Brooklyn, NY**

- Acted as intake counselor and managed a client caseload of 10 cases.
- Conducted short-term individual and family counseling; communicated with family and other agency staff; coordinated services with other agencies on behalf of clients.
- Conducted initial psychosocial assessments, developed and implemented outcome-oriented treatment plans.
- Coordinated, implemented, and followed-up on all discharge plans.
- Maintained documents, records, and statistics that monitored client activities

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**P. Cooper, pg. 2**

**Peace Corps**

**Sept. 2004 – Nov. 2006**

**Water Sanitation Engineer**

**Malawi, Africa**

- Designed, fundraised the US\$11,000 needed, and then participated in and oversaw the construction of a gravity-flow water system that now provides potable water for a low-income village of 200 people. The project took 11 months of planning, 8 months of construction and involved the entire community.
- Organized and motivated a local water committee to maintain community water system by creating a maintenance schedule, statutes, user fees, regulations, simple accounting methods, and a system of officers and elections. Trained two plumbers from the community to provide future maintenance.
- Worked with a local non-governmental organization to train 64 health promoters in First Aid, HIV/AIDS education, sanitation and conservation, water purification, and oral hygiene.
- Established a youth group that served as peer educators, planted a community garden, and participated in art classes, a dance team, a photography project, and field trips.
- Coordinated a three-day youth diversity camp of over 60 youth.

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

**American Red Cross**

**Aug. 2002 – May 2004**

**Campus Representative at Vanderbilt Chapter**

**Nashville, TN**

- Organized four campus-wide blood drives.

**INTERNSHIPS**

**Mediation Collaborative**

**May – Aug. 2002**

**Instructor**

**Nashville, TN**

- Taught middle school students (ages 12-15) literature and conflict resolution.
- Worked intensely with students as a teacher, tutor, and mentor.
- Created lesson plans and guided daily student discussions.

**The Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives**

**May – June 2001**

**Intern**

**Washington, D.C.**

- Performed primary research at the Library of Congress on the War of 1812.
- Assisted professional researchers in composing a Congressional history of the United States.

**HONORS**

Dean's List, 2001-2004

Service-Learning Program Community Service Scholarship, 2002

Golden Key Collegiate Honor Society ▪ Top 15 percent of class, 2004

Gamma Sigma Alpha ▪ National Greek Academic Honor Society, 2004

**COMPUTER SKILLS**

PC and Mac ▪ Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint ▪ SPSS

CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT  
A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

• **Sample Resume - #5**

**PAT COOPER**

123 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Apt. 1 • New York, New York 10027  
917.555.5555 • abc123@columbia.edu

**EDUCATION**

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, *New York, NY*

***Masters in Social Work***, Expected May 2010

Method: Advanced Clinical Practice; Concentration: Family, Youth, and Children

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *New York, NY*

***Masters in Public Health***, Expected May 2010

The Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health; Track: Reproductive, Adolescent, and Child Health

**Vassar College**, *Poughkeepsie, NY*

Bachelor of Arts, May 2002

Double Major: Art History, Studio Arts

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

FOUNDATION INC., NY, NY, Sept 2008-Present

*Foundation is a community-based organization that helps young people living in high poverty urban communities develop their strengths, skills, and talents through afterschool programming.*

- Develop and conduct community needs assessment of East New York residents to plan adult programming.
- Created an East New York provider coalition which meets monthly.
- Trained staff on conflict resolution and classroom management.
- Lead weekly case conference presentations for the campus management team.
- Facilitate two fifth grade psychoeducational groups focused on puberty, conflict resolution, and teamwork.

PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS: NONPROFIT CONSULTING SERVICES, NY, NY

Summer 2008

*Nonprofit Consulting Services provides consulting services focused on fiscal and government contract management best practices, organizational and staff development, and programmatic outcome monitoring and evaluation.*

- Provided technical assistance to grant recipients on creating logic models, developing evaluation tools, and using data to improve HIV prevention programs.
- Planned and co-facilitated training for 12 Community Based Organizations on continuous quality improvement.
- Developed RHIs social and emotional health curriculum for replication.
- Researched existing curricula and analyzed various options for the sale of new curricula to other youth development organizations.
- Provided technical assistance in areas of strategic development, fundraising, expansion, and community building.

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## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

VISITING NURSE SERVICE, NY, NY, Sept 2006-May 2007

*VNS provides a comprehensive array of programs and services for pregnant women, new parents and their infants, and children with chronic or acute illness and developmental delays.*

- Provided short-term, home-based services to families with a child with an Axis 1 diagnosis by helping them learn and develop ways to cope with and prevent crisis situations that could result in psychiatric hospitalization or out of home placement.
- Provided referral, linkage, coordination, monitoring, advocacy, social support and crisis intervention services.
- Facilitated three 12-month psychoeducational groups to train youth aged 12-22 as HIV peer educators.
- Supervised and developed a team of 7 group workers.
- Co-managed program budget of \$400,000.
- Co-developed youth development focused curriculum, recruited youth, coordinated events, and encouraged parent participation.

STUDENT PARTNERSHIP WORLDWIDE, *Eastern Cape, South Africa*, Jan 2003-Oct 2003

*Students Partnership Worldwide recruits and trains young people to work as volunteer Peer Educators who are based in a community and use interactive methodologies to bring about behavioral change in other young people.*

- Lived and worked with a local Xhosa colleague in a rural community where we taught residents about HIV and AIDS, reproductive health, sexuality, and healthy relationships.
- Designed and facilitated daily health education workshops for youth ages 10 to 28; co-taught weekly sex education class at a local K-10<sup>th</sup> grade school.

### **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

*SHAG is dedicated to reproductive and sexual rights for all people.*

- Co-planned a conference attended by 200 on how complex structural factors and inequalities impact sexual health.
- Researched and organized guest speakers to speak on various sexual health issues.
- Design and implement a MySpace page that provides teenagers with accessible sexual health information.

### **INTERESTS & SKILLS**

Language: Conversational Spanish, knowledge of Italian, and Xhosa.

Computer Skills: Advanced MS Word, Access, Intermediate MS Excel and PowerPoint, Knowledge of SPSS and Atlas.ti.

Interests: Travel, Running, Writing Poetry

*References available upon request.*

PAT COOPER, pg. 2

# CUSSW GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

### ◆ SAMPLE-COVER LETTER

Your Name  
Your Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Date

Name (Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.)  
Title  
Organization  
Street Address or PO Box #  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms \_\_\_\_\_:

**First Paragraph:** State specifically why you are writing by identifying the position, field or general area of your inquiry. Tell how you heard of the opening or organization and the central reason why you would like to work for that organization (e.g. its mission or philosophy) and/or why you are well suited for this opportunity.

**Body of letter (typically one or two paragraphs):** Elaborate on why you are particularly suited for THIS organization and THIS job by reviewing the job description, conducting online research, and specifically connecting the qualifications needed with your skills. Highlight your particularly relevant achievements. Elaborate on key points from your resume without repeating your resume word-for-word. This is not a paragraph version of your resume. Communicate clearly to the employer that you understand what is required of the position and the ways in which you have developed the skills the employer seeks.

**Final Paragraph:** Refer the employer to an enclosed resume and/or application form. Reiterate your interest in the specific position and restate the name of the organization. Request to meet with them to discuss this opportunity and your qualifications. Indicate how you can be contacted. If the position requires any level of “sales” skills (development, etc.) state that you will follow up (this demonstrates your comfort in doing this type of marketing outreach). But, if you state you will contact them, be sure to do so in the time you indicated! This is also the place that you include information that may be important but that you haven’t included elsewhere- for example if applying for a position out of town and you will be in the area at a certain time, if you will be out of the country and inaccessible for a period of time, etc. This is also where you include salary requirements, only if they request them.

Sincerely,

(insert signature)

} 3 spaces

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A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

555 W. 55th Street, #4D  
New York, NY 10023  
March 10, 2009

Ms. Kris Stackman  
Executive Director  
Forum at the Crossing  
555 Woodside  
Chicago, IL 60666

Dear Ms. Stackman:

Susan Alcott, Superintendent of the League for the Protection of Immigrants and a resident of the Forum, recommended I submit my resume in regards to the Development Director position with the Forum at the Crossing. With my graduate education from the Columbia University School of Social Work, proven abilities to motivate staff, and extensive fundraising experience, I am confident in my abilities to excel as Director of Development.

My five-year community service background includes program development experience in providing health, education, and psychological services for immigrants and women entering the work force at an organization called Immigrants First. In addition to providing these vital social services, I supervised junior staff, interns, and volunteers, and successfully designed and implemented several projects which increased funding by 45% over a two-year period. I also have several years of experience speech writing and fundraising.

Given my skills and our areas of mutual interest, I believe I could be of enormous assistance to you in the growth and expansion of the Forum. The details of my background appear in the enclosed resume. I will contact you next week for an appointment to further discuss ways I can contribute to your development initiatives. I can also be contacted at your convenience at 212-555-5555. I look forward to meeting with you soon. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Clark

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A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

**Mary Clark**

111 Broadway, New York, NY 10022  
212-555-5555 ▪ abc1111@columbia.edu

March 10, 2009

Human Resources Manager  
Visiting Nurse Services of New York  
111 W 110<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10011

Dear Human Resources Manager:

I have enclosed my resume in regarding to the Recruiter position posted on Idealist.org. In May of this year, I will be graduating from Columbia University School of Social Work with a Master of Science degree with a concentration in Social Enterprise Administration. As a Social Enterprise Administration student, I have taken courses in Human Resource Management, Supervision and Staff Development. This knowledge coupled with my professional recruiting experience would enable me to excel as part of your recruiting team.

Throughout my graduate studies and professional career, I have advertised, marketed and recruited for social services programs. In previous positions, I collaborated with school administration and assigned liaison(s) to recruit participation and marketed an employment program to develop jobs for youth in both public agencies and non-profit organizations for New York City. I have also developed marketing materials and presented the Addiction Prevention Initiative to education, healthcare, housing, legal institutions and community residents in order to both recruit clients and foster/develop resources for the program. More recently, during my leadership of a healthy living committee, I recruited workshop facilitators and developed marketing materials to promote Healthy Living Week to over 300 consumers. I am committed to improving the healthcare services available to families and believe that accomplishing this goal depends on developing a strong and compassionate healthcare workforce.

I am eager to contribute to your mission of connecting top quality providers to clients in need and am confident in my abilities to identify and recruit strong candidates for your nursing staff. I look forward to meeting with you in person. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Clark

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555 W. 55th Street, #4D  
New York, NY 10023  
March 10, 2009

Mr. Robert Burns  
Director  
Brooklyn Community Healthcare  
37 West 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10014

Dear Mr. Burns:

I would like to express my interest in applying my relevant experience to a position at Brooklyn Community Healthcare. I am a second year graduate student completing my Master of Social Work at the Columbia University School of Social Work. My concentration is in Advanced Clinical Social Work with a focus on Family, Youth and Children's Services. I am graduating in May and currently in the job search process. I believe that my skills and experience in the mental healthcare field make me an excellent candidate for a position in your organization.

My education, internships and past work experiences have provided me with the necessary skills to be successful in a community healthcare organization. As an intern at the Northeast Counseling Center, I conducted psychosocial assessments and treatment of children, adolescents, adults and families. I referred clients to community resources as needed. I also worked collaboratively with a team of psychologists, nurses and clinical social workers to set the Center's overall strategy and goals. As a social work intern at the Sisters Institute, I provided diagnostic evaluation and offered feedback to staff. I also developed and facilitated outreach to the surrounding community. Additionally, I have experience working as a crisis counselor on a suicide hotline where I provided help to adult and adolescent callers.

Attached please find my resume which includes specifics about my experiences. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss the potential opportunities within your organization. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Clark

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A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

◆ **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Doelling, C. N. (1997). *Social Work Career Development: A handbook for job hunting and career planning*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Fleming, Carol. (2000). *Guideline to Professionalism*. Retrieved August 11, 2009 from The Sound of your Voice Web Site:  
[http://www.speechtraining.com/Pages/articles\\_guidelines\\_professionalism.html](http://www.speechtraining.com/Pages/articles_guidelines_professionalism.html).

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philanthropy>

TCCS Career Development Guide. Columbia University Teachers College Career Services. 2006.

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A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

◆ **NOTES**

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◆ **NOTES**