The Helen Bader School of Social Welfare is committed to strengthening the community through research, teaching, and collaborative partnerships. In pursuing this mission, we have brought together well-respected scholars, students, and community partners in a way that addresses some of the most pressing issues facing society: substance abuse and addiction, poverty and the plight of families, and crime.

Students come to us with a passion for service, and we instill competence within them as they prepare to make their mark on the world. We help students realize their dream of making a difference in the lives of individuals and in their communities. Our school has served the region for 50 years, and we look forward to a bright future—with your help.

I feel so personally committed to our school’s mission that I decided to provide for the school’s future in my will. My hope is to help the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare continue to thrive as it moves forward. I encourage you to read on and learn more about what we are accomplishing and where we need to grow. Please join us in our journey!

Stan Stojkovic, Dean

CAMPAIGN GOAL: $4 MILLION
FOCUSING ON WHAT’S IMPORTANT

Almost universally, the people who choose careers in social welfare don’t do it for the money. They choose this path because they feel compelled to spend their professional lives helping others and making their community a better, healthier, and safer place to live.

Because social work and criminal justice are generally not high-paying fields, students who graduate with a large amount of debt enter their careers at a distinct disadvantage. It is the vision of the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare that no student will finish our program saddled with debt. We want our graduates to be free to focus on what they can give the world, not on what they owe.

GOAL FOR STUDENT SUPPORT: $2 MILLION

UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Support for undergraduates is our greatest area of need. Because 80 percent of our graduates stay in Wisconsin, funding a scholarship is an investment that will help our state thrive. Scholarships can be named after yourself, a loved one, or a mentor.

STUDENT STIPENDS

Our graduate students spend many hours each week in field placement or doing field work. This schedule makes it difficult if not impossible for them to hold a job during this portion of the program. Student stipends help sustain our students while they participate in this important hands-on experience.

DOCTORAL SUPPORT

Schools with PhD programs compete for the best students. Our doctoral students elevate the level of research being done at the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare and ultimately raise our national rankings. Stipends for PhD students are critical to attracting and retaining the very best students.

ADVANCING CAREERS

Samella Jolly has been in the social work field for more than 12 years, helping people afflicted with HIV/AIDS get housing and providing support for children with intellectual, physical, developmental, and social-emotional disabilities. Eventually she wants to become a licensed clinical therapist, but to accomplish that goal, she needs an advanced degree.

She decided to pursue her master’s in social work at the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare while working as a disabilities services coordinator for Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services and raising her son, niece, and nephew on her own. Receiving the Aileen Rockjordan Scholarship and the Karin Schmidt Nontraditional Student Scholarship has made pursuing her degree a bit less stressful. “I value education, and this financial relief enables me to continue taking care of my family and planning for my son’s future college education,” she says.

Students like Jolly who have practical work experience are exactly the type of people Karin Schmidt wanted to help when she created her endowed scholarship at the Helen Bader School. “Many nontraditional graduate students attend school while raising a family or working full time,” Schmidt says. “It gives me great satisfaction to know I can help future nontraditional students so they won’t have to struggle to pay for their education.”

I created an endowed scholarship for nontraditional students because it was the right thing to do.

KARIN SCHMIDT ’89
LOOKING FOR A BETTER WAY

A large part of the research done at the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare is in the form of evaluating programs, both public and private. For example, our researchers look at how to make adoption a more positive experience, how to empower a child caring for a sick or dying parent, how to give former addicts a greater chance at staying clean, or how to care for the elderly with respect and compassion.

Bottom line: We are constantly looking for ways to make people’s lives better, no matter what their age, their challenges, or their station in life.

GOAL FOR RESEARCH SUPPORT: $1 MILLION

INSTITUTE FOR CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

Our partnership with the Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin is focused on implementing effective programs, conducting cutting-edge research, and promoting change through policy and advocacy. This collaboration is helping children by shrinking the time for research to be translated into clinical practices.

CENTER FOR AGING AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

This program collaboration with the College for Health Sciences supports research in the field of gerontology. As baby boomers age and health care costs rise, this multidisciplinary center is fostering programs and projects that will have a meaningful impact on the lives of seniors.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE FUND

Faculty support within the field of criminal justice helps our faculty, staff, and student researchers advance their work. Support could be used to supplement salaries, provide stipends for students and faculty to travel to conferences, or offer unrestricted support.

ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

Our researchers are working to improve the outcomes of public and private programs in both the social work and criminal justice professions. Support for these efforts will help advance their research and will ultimately have an effect on countless people who benefit from the programs being assessed.

APPLYING RESEARCH TO REAL LIVES

“Graduation is really where you see the impact, and there are usually quite a bit of tears from a lot of people.” The event Tom LeBel describes is not a university commencement but rather drug treatment court graduation, which celebrates the completion of a program designed to keep individuals off drugs, out of the court system, and on track for a productive life.

An associate professor of criminal justice at the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare, LeBel was part of the team evaluating the Milwaukee County Drug Treatment Court between 2011 and 2015, when he moved on to other research projects. Department Chair Tina Freiburger has continued in the role of evaluator, working with a team that includes a judge, prosecutors, public defenders, a law enforcement officer, a drug court coordinator, case managers, and treatment professionals from the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division.

The evaluator conducts research on what works and what doesn’t, and then feeds that information back to the team so they can hone the approach to be more effective. “We provide as much information as we can about what’s working and what might work better for clients,” LeBel says. “Sharing our research—through publications or at conferences—also gives other researchers a sense of what’s effective, so we’re not all in our own little silos.”
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

TIES THAT BIND

The Helen Bader School of Social Welfare is inextricably tied to the surrounding community, through the services provided by our centers and through field-placement opportunities for our students. Each year, more than 800 local field agencies provide experiential learning to our students while thousands of people benefit from our work through the Center for Aging and Translational Research, the Institute for Child and Family Well-Being, and the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership.

Support for these programs has a direct impact on the people we serve and our students who are preparing for a lifetime of service.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Social workers throughout Wisconsin rely on programs provided by the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare for their continuing education credits to maintain their licenses in social work. Support for this program helps improve the quality of care employees provide their clients.

MILWAUKEE CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP

This dynamic program provides instruction for new and seasoned social workers, supervisors, foster parents, adoptive parents, and professionals who make home visits.

CRIME ANALYSIS PROGRAMS

Crime analysts are becoming the most sought-after individuals at all levels of law enforcement and are beginning to take prominent positions in criminal justice agencies. Our crime analysis programs are the most comprehensive in the nation. Support for this program will help us continue to prepare students in this burgeoning field.

GOAL FOR ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT: $1 MILLION

FROM RESEARCH TO REAL LIFE

One evening, case manager Julie Nitz had to remove a 6-year-old child from an unsafe home. Even though the move was done to ensure safety, the situation caused the child to be fearful during Nitz’s subsequent visits.

Learning how to handle these difficult, real-life, on-the-job situations are part of the training that goes on at the Milwaukee Child Welfare Program (MCWP), run by the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare. Each year, the MCWP trains thousands of child welfare workers, supervisors, home visitors, and foster and adoptive parents. UWM faculty help determine the curriculum and evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

“In 2016, about 13,000 people came to 90 different courses offered at our facility,” says Director Julie Brown. “Our program provides a tight connection between up-to-date research and the practical information that social welfare professionals and parents need. We give people the tools to help them identify what’s going well in a family and how to capitalize on that.”

Having this training has helped Nitz be more successful at case management. Recently she attended the graduation of a young woman who, thanks to Nitz’s help, went from sex trafficking to being reunited with her biological family. “That was a good day!”

JULIE BROWN

MCWP trains thousands of child welfare professionals, foster parents, and home visitors each year, which improves many families’ lives throughout Wisconsin.

JULIE NITZ (left)
(Pictured with with Jazmin Lamar ’14 and Patricia Parker)
After graduation, I found myself working in the Chicago area with graduates of prestigious, private universities who had paid a high price for their education and still seemed unprepared to work clinically. This caused me to reflect how easy it was to go to UWM, where my coursework was geared for real life work in the field. I decided to donate money to the school that saved me money and gave me excellent preparation for my career.

JUDITH M. KRAMER ’94, ’97

CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

1. STUDENT SUCCESS $2 MILLION
2. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE $1 MILLION
3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT $1 MILLION
There is a significant need for social workers who want to focus on assistance to the elderly. Since most graduates stay in our community for the rest of their professional careers, it is essential for the community to support social work students and UWM’s high-quality social work program.

– PHYLLIS MENSH BROSTOFF AND VALERIE STEFANICH
OWNERS OF STOWELL ASSOCIATES CARE-MANAGED HOME CARE

The Helen Bader School of Social Welfare provides students with opportunities that will shape their careers and lives. Service to the community is a critical path for students and one which I hold in high regard. I will continue to support the Helen Bader School because it is vital to our community and those that are served.

– MARTY ORDINANS ’78
ADMINISTRATOR OF MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE’S
RIGHT PATH PROGRAM