

# CURRENTS

OF THE NEW YORK CITY CHAPTER

National Association of Social Workers



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## "Worse Than You Think"- Poverty Tool Kit is Now Available

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## Equitable Salaries Campaign Survey Reveals Significant Pay Disparities

[Click here to read the full column](#)



## The Power of Faith in People's Lives Drawn Out at Annual Meeting

[Click here to read the full article](#)



## Sandy Bernabei Assumes NASW- NYC Presidency; Martha Sullivan Looks Back on the Past Two Years; Spring Election Results

[Click here to read the article](#)

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## Tourette Syndrome: What Social Workers Need to Know

Gary Frank, LCSW, ACSW

[Click here to read the article](#)

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## Message from the Outgoing President of the Board of Directors

### *A Note to My Beloved Community*

Martha Adams Sullivan, DSW

As I complete my term as your Chapter President, I wish to thank you, my beloved community of social workers for the work each of you do each day and for the support you have shown for the Chapter's work over these two years. I particularly want to thank the Board and the Committee Chairs, Bob Schachter and the Chapter Staff. They have worked hard. But more importantly, they have been open to new ideas, willing to push the envelope, thoughtful and insightful, clear and firm.

When we developed the Social Work Equity Project, the growing poverty in our City had been swept under the rug. Today, the Poverty Toolkit entitled *Worse Than You Think, The Dimensions of Poverty in NYC: What Social Workers See* is elucidating the problem in a way that social workers are uniquely positioned to do – as it is manifest across communities, populations, social problems and field of practice settings. It addresses disproportionality, and the intersection of poverty with dimensions of difference including race/ethnicity, gender, disability and all forms of oppression. The Toolkit counters myths and stereotypes regarding the poor which serve as obstacles to effective policies and services. Many thanks to Emily Foote, MSW (Chapter staff) for her editorial expertise. We are grateful to and proud of the seventeen contributors, especially Dr. Mimi Abramovitz, (Silberman School of Social Work, CUNY). Please go to the Chapter website to obtain the Toolkit. A series of easily accessible and readable briefs, I assure you that you will want to keep the Toolkit handy; it will not collect dust on a shelf. Direct service workers, clinicians, students, educators, researchers, policy/advocacy workers and organizers will find it instructive and useful. You can help to make a difference by disseminating it widely in your own network within and beyond social work.

The Social Work Equity Project also addressed inequitable professional social work salaries. The campaign has collected well over three thousand signers, who are demonstrating their support. We are beginning to learn of agencies that have found the salary standards and the campaign helpful in raising salaries for their social work staff.

The current City administration has engendered hopefulness that these problems will be addressed. The new Chapter Committee on Racism, Diversity and Intersectionality recently launched the Toolkit at Fordham University School of Social Work. It was refreshing and encouraging to hear the Deputy Mayor, Lilliam Barrios-Paoli, Ph.D. speak about how government can work collaboratively within and also collaborate with external partners in addressing social problems including poverty in our City. We are hopeful and we are joining the call for the Mayor to provide a COLA for social workers in contracted nonprofits when municipal social workers receive a COLA.

We have co-sponsored seminars on women and poverty and promulgated statements in opposition to the Trayvon Martin verdict, and the City's earlier Stop and Frisk policy. Arguably, religion may be the most difficult dimension for public discourse including our social work profession. At the most recent annual meeting Rev. Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook, former International Ambassador for Religious Freedom, along with a panel of social workers helped to initiate a deeper conversation on truly integrating the faith experiences of our clients into the helping relationship. Some of us began to disclose our own faith background and allow for nonbelievers to also come forward.

All of this work and more was done in addition to successfully addressing ongoing issues relating to licensing, loan forgiveness, and corporate compliance issues. Two major training conferences on the DSM-5 were co-sponsored with the NYU School of Social Work. And, we began early to prepare for the new Continuing Education Mandate, which the Chapter supported. An accredited conference is being planned for April 2015.

This is not nor is it meant to be an exhaustive review of the Chapter's activities. It is only meant to reflect back for all of us, members of the beloved community, that we have held true to the principles of our profession, the NASW mission and our own integrity, even when it was not easy, when no one else seemed to be doing it, or, when others flatly disagreed. There were times when some colleagues felt we were missing the mark. I like to think of being "happily maladjusted." In the words of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King:

*"...there are certain things in our nation and in the world to which I am proud to be maladjusted and which I hope all [people] of good-will will be maladjusted until the good solidities realize. I say very honestly that I never intend to become adjusted to segregation and discrimination. I never intend to become adjusted to religious bigotry. I never intend to adjust myself to economic conditions that will take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few. I never intend to adjust myself to the madness of militarism, to the self-defeating effects of physical violence... [but] as maladjusted as the prophet Amos. Who in the midst of the injustices of his day could cry out in words that echo across the centuries 'Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.'"*

In my closing remarks to the Board, I reviewed the nomination statement I put forth and on which I was elected. I am satisfied that I have, with a tremendous amount of help and support, done what I set out to do.

This message is not really a farewell because though I am stepping down, the work continues. I will join and support the Chapter's work in any way that I can. And, I hope you will continue to do so too!



## **Chapter Election Results Are In: NASW-NYC Welcomes Newest Board and Nominations Committee Members**

### ***New Board Members***

#### **2nd VP**

Roy Kearse, LCSW, CASAC

#### **Secretary**

Christine Fewell, PhD, LCSW, CASAC

#### **Members at Large**

Barbara Feldmann, LCSW, CASAC

Mary Ruth Govindavari, MSW

Janice Helena Hawkins, MSW, PhD

Emily Sherlock, LMSW

Linda Tillmon, LCSW

Pamela Valera, PhD, ACSW

#### **MSW Student Member**

Brian Romero

#### **BSW Student Member**

Nora Dwyer

### ***Nominations Committee***

Erica Adelman, LMSW

Randi Anderson, JD, LCSW

Ava Fevrier, MSW Student

Justin Lioi, LCSW

Elisheva Lock MPA, LMSW

Megan Wilen, LCSW

## Campaign for Equitable Salaries

# Survey of What Employers Pay Social Workers Reveals Significant Disparities

In anticipation of launching the NASW-NYC's Equitable Salaries Campaign in January, a simple survey was conducted in the fall of 2013 to get a snapshot of what organizations that employ social workers pay them. Although the results were not surprising, given prior knowledge of what social workers earn, wide disparities between different sectors were confirmed.

### Salaries In The Not-For-Profit Human Services Sector

In the not-for-profit sector that includes an array of service programs, including behavioral health, addictions, aging, families and children's services, disabilities and homeless services, starting salaries for social workers with a masters degree were consistently \$41,000 to \$43,000 a year.

This information was gathered via interviews with staff with knowledge of what their agencies paid, and in most cases salary information was gathered in two agencies in each service sector. What was striking was how consistent this information was regardless of the service being provided.

One domestic violence agency in the not-for-profit sector was found to be paying social workers considerably more than other agencies in the sector, \$50,000 a year, as much as \$7,000 to 9,000 more than other agencies. A follow up interview to understand what accounted for this difference showed that the agency had made it a priority to bring social workers up to a level equivalent to the attorneys on staff. (NASW-NYC has invited the consulting organization that advised this agency to write an article for the newsletter in the near future).

### Other Sectors Pay Social Workers Considerably More

In both the municipal and voluntary hospitals, beginning social workers are being paid between \$49,500 and \$55,000. This is similar to what the Office of Mental Health offers to social workers seeking employment in the state run mental health system.

The New York City school system, which pays masters level social workers on par with teachers with similar experience and education, was paying school social workers \$56,000 start. This was prior to the new contract between the City and the United Federation of Teachers, which includes both retroactive and future raises, totaling 18% over the next 9 years.

### NASW-NYC Campaign Having an Impact

#### Agency moves to increase salaries of its social workers

The president and CEO of Visions-Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Nancy Miller, announced recently that she was increasing the salaries of social workers and others on staff to be more on par with the NASW-NYC guidelines for salaries.

In a similar fashion, the Board of Directors of NASW-NYC has taken the first step in a multi-year strategy to raise the salaries of its beginning MSW staff to \$50,000/year.

If you know of any employer that is raising salaries, please let us know at [contactus@naswnyc.org](mailto:contactus@naswnyc.org).

## Salaries of Allied Professionals Considerably Higher

Although many social workers are being paid significantly higher than in the not-for-profit sector, disparities still exist. For example, registered nurses (RNs) with less education than master level social workers appear to be paid consistently higher salaries in hospitals, including doing care coordination, a vital role of social workers. In one voluntary hospital, RNs were reported to being paid over \$100,000, approximately double what the social workers are paid. Other hospitals may be paying less than this, but over \$70,000 to start.

NASW-NYC is currently collaborating with the leadership of the Society of Social Workers in Health Care to draw out the unique contribution social workers make in health care, translating this into the economic opportunities and risks that health care institutions face when the psychosocial aspects of health are considered. The resulting paper is intended to be used to make the case for equitable salaries in health care, along with more extensive social work utilization.

Sector		Beginning Salaries
Social work salaries in the Not-for-Profit Human Services		\$41,000 to \$43,000/year
Social Work Salaries in hospitals, state run mental health system and public schools		\$49,000 to \$56,000/year

The NASW-NYC Equitable Salaries Campaign began in January and has been joined by close to 4,000 supporters. It is the goal of the campaign to bring awareness of the need for equitable social work salaries, and to begin to change the assumption of what social workers are paid. To read the statement that launched the campaign and to sign on, click the link below:

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**EQUITABLE  
SOCIAL WORK  
SALARIES**  
Social workers advocate for others-  
help us advocate for **YOU!**  
**NASWNYC.ORG**



## The Power of Faith, Religion and Spirituality Drawn Out at Annual Meeting



Reverend Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook, Former US Ambassador for Religious Freedom

On the evening of May 15th, 2014, NASW-NYC welcomed over 300 members to its annual meeting in lower Manhattan. The theme, The Significance of Faith, recognized that regardless of our own personal beliefs as social workers, religion and spirituality have an important place in the lives of our clients. Yet, because of our differences and the prominence of religious values in the political arena and the intensity of many of these issues, social work as a profession has often been hesitant to fully address the belief systems of our clients as part of our focus on cultural competency. In effect, the role of religion in our clients' lives too often is minimized and not discussed.

A powerful keynote address was delivered by Rev. Dr. Ambassador Suzan Johnson Cook and a distinguished panel explored why this is important, what we may be missing, and offered insights on how we can sort out the political and the personal from the professional.

[Click here to watch the Keynote Speech](#)

[Click here to watch the Panel Discussion](#)



Left: NASW-NYC members at the Annual Meeting  
Right: Panelists Francis Gautieri, LCSW, Leonie Nowitz, LCSW, Kay Surrey Hosny, LCSW, and Manny Gonzalez, DSW





## 2014 NASW-NYC Honorees

### NASW-NYC Lifetime Achievement and James R. Dumpson Chapter Service Award



NASW-NYC Chapter President Martha Adams Sullivan and Executive Director Robert Schachter present the Lifetime Achievement Award to Frances Gautieri, LCSW, ACSW and the James R. Dumpson Chapter Service Award to Tom Sedgwick, MSSW, LCSW-R, ACSW, CCM.

### NASW-NYC Social Work Image Awards



Dr. Sullivan and Dr. Schachter are joined by Ella Harris, LCSW of NASW-NYC's Board of Directors to present the Social Work Image Awards to (clockwise from top left): Commissioner of NYC's Department for the Aging Donna Corrado, PhD, LCSW, Scott Kramer, LCSW, ACSW, Folusho Otuyelu, PhD, LCSW, and Dean Steven Huberman, PhD, of Touro College Graduate School of Social Work.



# Annual Meeting Underwriters and Co-Sponsors

NASW-NYC thanks the many organizations that underwrote and co-sponsored the 2014 Annual Meeting. Social workers appreciate the meaningful contributions of these organizations which enhance the Chapter's advocacy and programming.

## Underwriters

Mutual of America  
Mary Pender Greene

## NASW Pioneers

Phyllis Caroff	Friedhilde Milburn
Elaine Congress	Nancy D. Miller
James Donnelly	Marilyn Ohrenstein
Teresa Gardian	Ann S. Sand
Frances Gautieri	Barbara Silverstone
Mary Pender Greene	Renee Solomon
Helen Hamlin	Rose Z. Starr
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NASW-NYC PACE  
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William Alanson White Institute

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United Neighborhood Houses of New York  
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YWCA of the City of New York

## Friend

Selfhelp Community Services, Inc.  
The Citywide Behavioral Health Coalition for the Black Elderly

## **Tourette Syndrome: What Social Workers Should Know**

*Gary Frank LCSW, ACSW*

*Executive Vice President*

*Tourette Syndrome Association*

A misunderstood condition. It is likely that social workers in every setting will encounter a child, individual, or family affected by Tourette Syndrome (TS). However, it may also be possible that these people are themselves unaware that they have TS. TS is a neurodevelopmental disorder that is widely misunderstood by the public and professionals alike. Although awareness of TS is growing, it is often misdiagnosed or undiagnosed all together. Named in 1884 for French physician Gilles De La Tourette, TS is characterized by unwanted and uncontrollable sounds and movements called 'tics,' which wax and wane.

Common motor tics include eye-blinking, facial grimacing, head-jerking, and neck-stretching. Complex motor tics may even look purposeful, such as hopping, twirling, or jumping. Common vocal tics include sniffing, throat-clearing, grunting, hooting, or shouting. Complex vocal tics can include meaningful words or phrases. In rare cases, symptoms can even include ethnic slurs, swear words or other socially unacceptable comments. This particular symptom, called coprolalia, affects a small percentage of people with TS. It is the characteristic of the disorder that is often crudely mocked by comics, in movies, online, and on television.

Tics most often emerge around ages 5-7, although diagnosis of TS or other tic disorders can be delayed or missed. TS affects members of all racial and ethnic groups, but occurs more in males than females. Studies indicate that a range (50-90%) of TS patients also have psychiatric and behavioral co-morbidities, including Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), learning disabilities, sensory issues, anxiety disorders, impulsivity, and more. Considering the complexities of TS, the frequent co-occurrence of associated conditions, and the waxing and waning nature of tic expression, it can be very difficult and debilitating to live with TS and challenging to recognize, diagnose, treat and manage.

The national Tourette Syndrome Association (TSA), located in Queens, receives emails and calls every day reflecting many of the psychosocial challenges of living with TS. Questions about finding a doctor, getting a new diagnosis, and challenges to educational rights comprise the majority of inquiries TSA receives. This is a disorder that is not life-threatening. However, in many cases, TS can impact every aspect of life. As with other conditions, some individuals with TS develop resilience and thrive. Many others, however, consider TS to be life-tormenting, as it can be extremely frustrating to lack control over one's movements and sounds. People with TS often say that the reaction of others—such as employers, teachers, law enforcement, and the general public—is harder to live with than the symptoms themselves.

As with many disabling conditions, kids with TS are prime targets for bullies. However, TSA also regularly receives reports from adults whose symptoms are mocked by co-workers and minimized by supervisors. Siblings in some cases resent the attention paid to their sister or brother with TS. It can be harder to sustain a relationship when a partner makes unusual movements and noises, struggles with impulsivity and attention issues, or is obsessive to a significant degree. Marriages break up. Caring for children with TS can feel overwhelming. The social work therapist who can recognize TS, become knowledgeable about its effects, and offer support, referral, therapy, astute advocacy and/or staff education can bring invaluable skills and help to the TS community across New York City.

A clear role for social workers. We believe that social workers, by virtue of working across many different systems, and helping a wide range of people, are uniquely situated to make an important difference for those with TS. I urge my colleagues to learn about TS and to identify opportunities for helpful, clarifying, informative interventions when TS is unrecognized or misunderstood. Social workers can help develop coping strategies, secure needed accommodations, and offer support to those facing a variety of difficulties due to TS. Sorting out complexities, prompting for clarity, providing direct advocacy when needed, and informing other professionals and the public, are what we as social workers do! Children and individuals with TS (and those that teach, care for, and engage with them) will welcome your help.

TSA encourages social workers to become acquainted with TS precisely to meet these needs. TSA has developed a ten-year congressionally authorized professional education and outreach partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) toward this end. No-cost programs are offered by the TSA-CDC partnership to bring professional TS education to social workers. These programs can be held through professional social work associations, schools of social work, and practice settings. Presentations provide a detailed overview of TS and address various management strategies and treatments. After attending TSA-CDC educational programs, social workers in medical sites, schools, community support centers, foster care, and other environments will be able to help promote accurate recognition, diagnosis, and management of this complex condition.

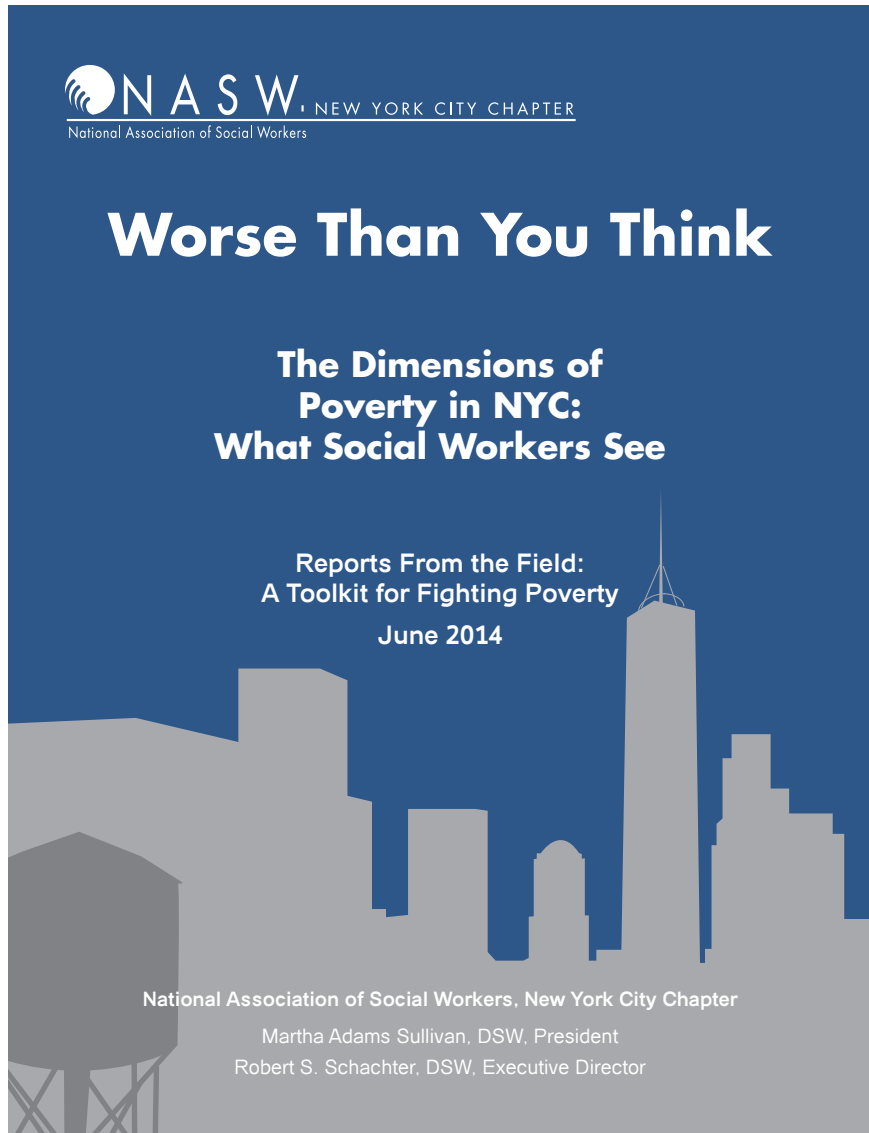
Additionally, specialized programs can be held to teach social workers about Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention for Tics (CBIT), a recent addition to the range of evidence-based behavioral therapy approaches for TS management. CBIT involves a combination of elements: awareness of the premonitory urges of tics; habit reversal training; psychoeducation; and function-based analysis and behavioral intervention. CBIT has been tested in two parallel multi-site randomized controlled trials, which have shown significant reductions in the severity of tic symptoms, both in children and adults. Clinical social workers have been among the early adopters of the CBIT protocol, which is often recommended as first-line treatment for TS patients. While CBIT has been proven to be effective, there are not enough professionals who are familiar with it. TSA strives to educate social workers about CBIT and to become CBIT practitioners.

As a social worker, you can become a leader in recognizing and responding to TS. TSA believes strongly in the role social workers can play in serving constituents and welcomes the opportunity to work with individuals or organizations seeking more information on TS.

For more information please contact: [www.tsa-usa.org](http://www.tsa-usa.org) [ts@tsa-usa.org](mailto:ts@tsa-usa.org)

# JUST RELEASED

NASW-NYC has just published “Worse Than You Think: A Toolkit for Fighting Poverty.” It contains 17 briefs from leaders in the social work field in NYC. In addition to addressing pervasive myths about poverty and providing the facts to dispell them, this comprehensive document looks at the causes and effects of poverty in various communities and specialized fields of practice throughout New York. The toolkit is available as a complete PDF [here](#).



These poverty briefs  
are a key part of  
NASW-NYC's  
Social Work  
Equity Agenda



## FEATURING BRIEFS FROM

Mimi Abramovitz  
Jeane W. Anastas  
S. J. Dodd  
Manny Gonzalez  
Dianne Heggie  
Evelyn Laureano  
Danielle Moss Lee  
Nancy D. Miller  
Carmen Ortiz Hendricks  
Elizabeth Rogers  
Frederick Shack  
Martha Adams Sullivan  
My-Lan Tran

## HIGHLIGHTING THE INTERSECTION OF POVERTY WITH

Hunger, Safety Net Programs, Housing, Health Care, Immigration,  
Race, Why People are Poor, Mental Health, Aging, Children,  
Women, Homelessness, Disabilities, LGBTQ Populations,  
Communities of African, Asian, and Latino Descent

# Endorsements

Social workers work in every community in New York City and know firsthand the dimensions of poverty. NASW-NYC welcomes the heightened concern about poverty and inequality that has emerged since the election of Mayor Bill de Blasio; at the same time, we recognize that the magnitude of poverty and its impact on people's lives will need sustained attention.

NASW-NYC's publication, "Worse Than You Think – The Dimensions of Poverty in New York City: What Social Workers See," shines a light on 17 dimensions of poverty. It is intended to help all of us begin to comprehend who is affected by poverty. This understanding is essential if we are going to maintain the long-term commitment that will be necessary to ameliorate the impact of these adverse economic and social conditions.

*"NASW-NYC has created an important and educational toolkit to help fight poverty in New York City. It dispels so many of the myths about low-income people and their fight to survive. The information about individuals, families, and children who live in poverty is compelling and based on the latest data in the field. The toolkit provides a guide that social workers, advocates, policy-makers, and educators can use to make sense of the complex social and economic struggles that low-income people face."*

~ Robert Hawkins, PhD, McSilver Associate Professor, NYU Silver School of Social Work

*"This toolkit will undoubtedly provide a space for service providers to address the multilayered issues facing the most vulnerable populations with whom we work—those communities impacted by poverty. We cannot silo our work in any one critical need area without looking at its relationship to poverty. Paying heed to this intersection is the first step toward making a meaningful impact as a profession."*

~ Dr. Mary M. McKay, Director, McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research  
NYU Silver School of Social Work

*"This publication documents the depth, pervasiveness, wide-ranging and devastating consequences of poverty in our city. These poverty briefs by leading researchers and practitioners should serve as a call to action for social workers to advocate for comprehensive policy changes that will truly make a difference in the lives of our clients and communities."*

~ Jacqueline Mondros, DSW, Dean, Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College

*"The Great Recession of the past few years has hit everyone hard. It has exacerbated inequality in America. The top earning 1% have increased their income by 275% from 1979 to 2007. The rest have fallen behind. But what do we do? NASW-NYC has laid out the facts. This is a must-read for government leaders, elected officials, and human service professionals. If you want the facts in an understandable format and are looking for ways to fix inequality, you need to read this volume."*

~ Steven Huberman, PhD, Dean, Touro College Graduate School of Social Work



## NASW-NYC Committee on Race, Diversity & Intersectionality Holds Inaugural Event

The Committee on Race, Diversity and Intersectionality (CRDI), co-chaired by Board of Directors members Candida Brooks-Harrison, Director of The Village Enrichment and professor at Brooklyn College-CUNY, and Linda Lausell Bryant, Executive Director of Inwood House, grows out of NASW-NYC's commitment to social justice as embodied in its Social Work Equity Project. In the fall of 2013, the CRDI met to discuss and organize around critical issues and concerns of our diverse membership and the clients served across practice areas and settings. NASW-NYC has placed a focused lens on race & racism as a social construct with power and great impact. We also recognize that there are many aspects to identity and the intersection of where they meet is a crucial place for understanding ourselves, our clients and our society.

On June 9th, 100 social workers gathered at Forham University Graduate School of Social Service for a roundtable discussion on poverty across race, diversity, and intersectionality. Deputy Mayor for Health & Human Services Lilliam Barrios-Paoli, Dr. Mimi Abramovitz, and Christine D'Onofrio, Director for Poverty Research at the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity delivered remarks and participated in a robust discussion with audience members.



Clockwise from top left: NASW-NYC Chapter President Sandy Bernabei and outgoing President Martha Adams Sullivan are joined by Professor Mimi Abramovitz, chief contributor to the Chapter's Poverty Toolkit; panelists Christiana Best-Giacomini, Greg Acevedo, My-Lan Tran, Manny Gonzalez, and Jennifer Elliott; President Sullivan poses a question to the panel; CRDI co-chair Candida Brooks-Harrison introduces Christine D'Onofrio.

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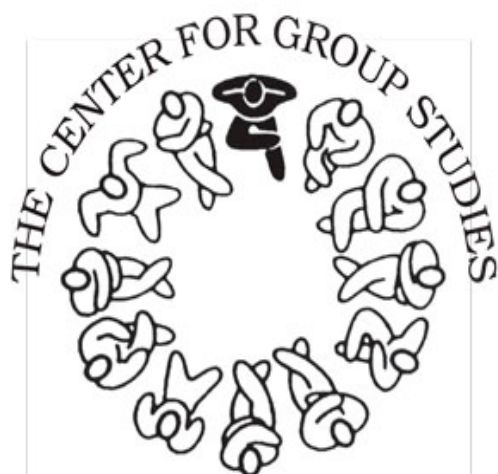
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Open Houses Held Monthly

September 30: 1:30PM - October 28: 5:30PM - November 25: 1:30PM

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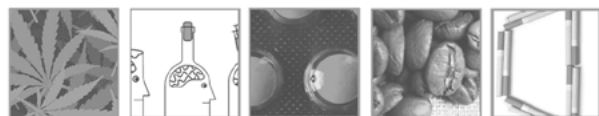
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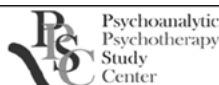
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