

# CURRENTS

OF THE NEW YORK CITY CHAPTER

National Association of Social Workers



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September/October Volume 59/No.1



## Update on Requirements Under New Law

### NASW-NYC Holding Major Conference in Spring 2015

[Click here for more information](#)



## Called to be Architects of a Fair & Better Future

**Sandy Bernabei, LCSW**  
**President, NASW-NYC Board of Directors**

[Click here to read the column](#)



## Inspired Presentations Delivered at National NASW Conference – Videos Now Available to NYC Members

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## Chapter and National Updates

**NASW-NYC Social Justice Activity**

**Update on the Affordable Care Act & Social Work**

**Unaccompanied Migrant Children**

**The Global Agenda: Global Social Work to Local Practice**

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*\*\* Chapter and National Updates are links from both Socialworkers.org and Naswnyc.org. Please login to read the full articles.*

## **Update on Requirements for Continuing Education**

# **What NY social workers need to know right now**

## **NASW-NYC Planning a Conference for the Profession on April 8**

- This article expands on prior notices from NASW-NYC on continuing education requirements and provides information for what licensed social workers need to know at this time.
- This is also a notice that NASW-NYC will be offering CEUs through a major conference on April 8 and free standing workshops through the winter and spring.
- NASW-NYC expects to be approved as an authorized provider of CE in New York.

By January 1, 2015 most licensed social workers will be required to obtain 36 continuing education (CE) credits over a three year period in order to renew their license. The exception is that new licensees, whether having recently obtained the LMSW or the LCSW, do not need to obtain CE credits until after their first license renewal.

There are somewhat more than 20,000 licensed social workers in New York City, fairly evenly split between LMSWs and LCSWs, and NASW-NYC estimates that approximately 15,000 will be required to start accumulating CE credits as of January.

NASW-NYC recommends that social workers begin to accumulate their hours as soon as possible and not wait until the year of renewal, if at all possible. To accommodate this, NASW will be providing a range of CE offerings beginning as soon as these requirements go into effect ( more on this below).

As the law first goes into effect, many social workers will find that they are coming up for renewal in less than three years, and some will come up for renewal in the very first months after January. For example, an NASW member emailed recently to inquire about what she will need to do since her renewal comes up on February 1, 2015. The answer is that she will need to document that she has at least one CE credit by that time.

On average, one CE credit will be needed at the rate of one credit per month, although this does not mean one has to obtain CEs every single month, it is an average. This is helpful in order to calculate how many credits will be needed when your renewal comes up before three years or 36 months.

On another matter, NASW-NYC has received inquiries from members as to whether CE credits can be accumulated prior to January 1. The answer is no.

There are providers of continuing education programs claiming that workshops held prior to January are approved for social workers. This is most likely NOT related to the new state requirements. Continuing education credits have been offered in other states for many years and some social workers in New York have been accumulating credits for reasons not related to state law. The Chapter recommends caution before assuming what a provider is claiming that they say credits are approved.

Any continuing education credits accumulated prior to January will not be acceptable to the State Education Department (SED), and licensed social workers who report to the State that they have credits taken before the effective date (January) could put themselves in jeopardy if their documentation were to be reviewed. Anyone claiming such credits when they renew could actually be falling short of what is required.

Every offering of continuing education in New York will need to be approved by SED. This means two things: 1) that the organization that provides continuing education needs to be approved in order to be a recognized provider, and 2) the presenter and the topic for a specific offering needs to be approved. The providing organization will need to seek approval from SED for every offering.

It will be wise for social workers to check the website of the Office of the Professions (OP)' social work page and find the listing of approved providers. This should prove helpful. The web address is: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/sw/swceproviderlist.htm>. Since this process is new, there are no providers at the present time.

NASW-NYC is confident that it will be approved as a provider of continuing education offerings and that what it does offer will also be acceptable to OP. The Chapter will be applying for approval as a provider in October, but OP's application states that organizations should expect up to 90 days to receive approval.

### **Hold the Date: Major Conference for the Profession Planned for April 8, 2015**

In anticipation of the continuing education requirements going into effect, NASW-NYC's Board of Directors began planning a conference for the profession in New York City. The intent is to enable licensed social workers to obtain their CE credits fairly early.

At this moment, NASW-NYC is finalizing an agreement for a large, state of the art conference space in Manhattan that will allow us to accommodate hundreds of social workers and to have up to 20 breakout sessions. The conference to be held on Wednesday, April 8, 2015.

NASW-NYC will also expand its offerings of free-standing workshops, beginning in January.

[Previous update on the CE Mandate](#)  
[Link to NYSED Website](#)

[Please email us if you have any questions.](#)

## **Hold the Date**

**Wednesday, April 8, 2014**

**Major Conference for the Profession**

**"SOCIAL WORK IN THE CITY:  
DREAMS AND REALITIES OF LIFE IN NEW YORK"**

Detailed information will be sent to all NASW-NYC members in the late fall. The conference will offer 6 CEU hours to help licensed social workers meet the requirements for continuing education.



**Social Work in the City:  
Called to be Architects of a Fair and Better Future**  
**Sandy Bernabei, LCSW**

I am filled with excitement and anticipation as I begin my two-year NYC Chapter presidency along with my board colleagues, diverse and experienced leaders. We are committed to protecting, promoting, and advancing our profession and at the same time addressing social injustice. Together, our Association can build our future, grounded on the [NYC Chapter priorities](#) that include continuing education, loan forgiveness, licensing, clinical development, and private practice mentorship.

We chose to practice social work in [New York City](#) - a city that is characterized by its density and diversity. Almost eight and a half million residents makes us the largest and most populous city in the United States. We are 44 percent white and 56 percent people of color and are the most linguistically diverse city in the world with as many as 800 languages spoken. We are also listed among [America's 10 most segregated cities](#) with high poverty levels in racially segregated neighborhoods. What comes with all of this humanity are challenges of living for all of us. Choosing to practice Social Work in New York City is not for the faint-hearted.

With this said, I would like to introduce myself and share my commitments and passions. I am a clinical social worker practicing for 34 years with individuals and families recovering from the disease of addiction. As a clinician in Hell's Kitchen, I have worked with clients who are famous as well as those who are homeless; in Westchester, individuals and families who are wealthy and poor visit my office; students formed my client base when I served as the Director of Substance Abuse Prevention at Barnard College, Columbia University; as Executive Director of The Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence in Rockland County, I worked with virtually all members of the community.

It has been an honor to work with people who have lost their sense of belonging and connection to themselves, others and the world. Many have seen heaven and hell and now live transformed lives. I have been moved and inspired by their journeys.

This has led me to a deeper concern for all people whose dignity and humanity are left out of the decision-making process of the larger community. The NASW-NYC Chapter acknowledges Mayor de Blasio for naming the disparity between rich and poor that has become blatantly visible in New York as a "Tale of Two Cities." Our Chapter has taken a strong stand to support the social work profession and the welfare of people who live in our City. I will share a number of our campaigns that begin to build our focus.

The Chapter's Social Work Equity Project is committed to economic equity for ourselves and our clients and to improving working conditions for social workers. The [Equitable Salaries Campaign](#) and the [Human Resources Workforce Survey](#) substantiate the reality that social workers are underpaid and over worked. In an effort to achieve professional equity, I have widened our reach by contacting Chapter presidents nationwide to join us in this effort and to share a common voice.

[The Poverty Toolkit: "Worse Than You Think: The Dimensions of Poverty in NYC"](#) spearheaded by Martha Sullivan, past NASW-NYC President, is a powerful document intended to lift voices and design policies and programs to reduce economic inequity in our City. I encourage you to use it often to inform your work, to validate your clients' experiences and to help shape the decisions you make. In addition, Mimi Abramovitz's ["Place Matters, The Community Loss Index: A New Social Indicator"](#) demonstrates how health and social

problems amass when large numbers of people, living in close proximity, regularly suffer multiple, persistent losses at the same time due to multiple social systems failures in NYC's racially segregated geographic hotspots. Together, the Poverty Toolkit and Community Loss Index call upon us to address these social injustices and become agents of institutional change in this City.

An important part of our work together will be to draw from the enormous well of resources and commitment in the Social Work community to identify root causes of our city's social problems and take the lead in building cross-systems alliances that align expertise to find lasting solutions to these social exclusions and disparities. Neuroscience research explains that social exclusion provokes pain similar to physical pain. As social workers trained in social systems thinking we can only infer that helping individuals find personal power is insufficient in the face of persistent social pain and that people cannot be separated from their place in the political and social landscape.

There are many who are colorblind and believe that we live in a post-racialized society. However, the need for continued focus on race is supported by data. While we would like to believe that race no longer matters, evidence supports that outcomes for every institution in America disproportionately and negatively impact the same poor communities of color. Since this holds true across all institutions, we can neither blame those most affected, nor think that in "fixing" them, we fix the problem. When every institution disproportionately and negatively affects the same group of people, we must have an honest conversation about the behavior of these institutions and work for institutional change.

Social problems in our society, whether evidenced through separate 'Poor Door' entrances for low-income renters in luxury high-rise apartments in Manhattan or the police killing of Staten Island resident [Eric Garner](#) by chokehold, create deep personal and social pain. This issue has finally captured mainstream attention as the [United Nations calls for an end to police brutality in the US after the Ferguson shooting](#). Social and economic disparities often, though not always, follow racial lines in NYC, whether we look at health care, education, criminal justice or housing.

I am a founding member of the [AntiRacist Alliance](#). Its vision is to build a social work movement to achieve racial equity in our lifetime. Since 2002, more than 8,400 human service providers from all fields of social work practice and community members have completed the Undoing Racism® workshop. An article, "[Think Creatively and Act Decisively: Creating an Antiracist Alliance of Social Workers](#)," written by members of this alliance, was recently published by NASW. We also maintain a social work race equity column in [The New Social Worker](#) online magazine.

The AntiRacist Alliance worked with NASW National to plan a [NASW Think Tank on Achieving Racial Equity](#), held in November 2013 in D.C. It was attended by sixty-five leading national race equity experts and key social work stakeholders from all facets of the social work profession; practitioners, policy makers, organizers, administrators, researchers, academicians, funders, and community organizers—all committed to undoing racism and achieving racial equity. This work will continue.

In March of this year I facilitated a Congressional Social Work Caucus Briefing sponsored by NASW in conjunction with the Congressional Social Work Caucus chaired by Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-California). She supports the establishment of race competencies for the profession to achieve racial equity. The proposed interventions benefit everyone. For instance, data taken from child welfare indicates that when we implement accountable institutional change committed to racial equity, outcomes improve for all race groups, including whites.

In June 2014, The AntiRacist Alliance submitted a Grand Challenge concept paper to the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, who seeks to identify ambitious yet achievable goals for the profession. An excerpt states: "As of 2014, there is not a single profession in the US that requires its professionals to demonstrate an understanding of structural racism and its impact on its citizenry nor has a single association established an official base of competencies to address race and racism."

We must be the profession to establish race competencies. We will be the first to generate a professionally trained body to embrace set principles towards achieving racial equity, address colorblindness, develop equity expertise within our profession and lead institutions that partner with vulnerable neighborhoods for cross-systems transformational work.

It is time to move forward as the bold and audacious profession that we are. While we are delivering excellence in clinical and human services to individuals and families, we must move beyond solutions for the individual and look deeper into root causes of the problems and move to resolve them.

We are in great hands. NASW staff are vibrant, creative and competent new professionals. Our Executive Director leads one of the largest chapters in the country. He is a community organizer with human service connections and relationships with gatekeepers throughout the City.

We want to learn about the contribution that you want to make to our profession and look forward to meeting you at [committee meetings](#) and the upcoming NASW Conference of the Profession to be held on April 8th, 2015.

I used to throw stones at Institutions, now I've become a part of them. Please don't throw stones. We have a future to build together where we are paid [salaries](#) commensurate with our education and expertise and [work in environments](#) where we are respected, valued and appreciated.

Grounded in trailblazing successes, NASW is now called to be bold; to galvanize the spirit and gifts of our profession for institutional equity, to capture the participation and energy of new professionals and expand NASW-NYC membership. We are the hope for fair access to a better future!

Sandy Bernabei, LCSW  
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Sandy Bernabei, Dr. Martha Adams Sullivan & Dr. Mimi Abramovitz

## Creative Mentorship and Career Building Strategies: How to Build Your Virtual Board of Directors



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**Mary Pender Greene, LCSW-R, CGP** is a career & executive coach, trainer, and consultant. She is a thought leader in the social services industry, recognized by her peers for her wisdom, contributions, and novel ideas on coaching, mentoring, and sharing knowledge. Mary has more than 20 years of experience helping individuals, couples, companies, and non-profit organizations. She has been instrumental in coaching countless individuals in building their own VPBODs.

Mary's background also includes executive management roles at America's largest non-profit organization, The Jewish Board of Family Services (JBFC) in New York City. For more information and to buy the book, please visit [www.marypendergreene.com](http://www.marypendergreene.com).

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## Social Justice Action NASW-NYC Issues Statement; Joins Important Demonstrations

### Staten Island, NY, August, 2014 March for Unity & Justice

On August 4, 2014, NASW-NYC issued a statement on the tragic death of Eric Garner, a Staten Island man who died after being held in a chokehold by a NYC police officer. You can read [the full statement here](#). Subsequently, on Saturday the 23rd of August, NASW-NYC members and leaders joined the United Federation of Teachers, 1199 SEIU, NAACP, and others in a March for Unity and Justice on Staten Island.



### UWS, Manhattan, September, 2014 People's Climate March

On Saturday, September 21st, NASW-NYC will join the People's Climate March. If you are interested in participating, please come to our meeting place on the east side of Columbus Avenue at 85th Street at 10 AM. Look for our big, blue NASW banner.



## NASW National Conference 2014

### [View Highlights from the 2014 NASW Conference](#)

[Conference Video and Photo Gallery](#)

Visit our [Twitter](#) feed for highlights from the 2014 NASW Conference.

[www.naswconference.org](http://www.naswconference.org)



## ***In case you missed it...*** **Social Work Update: Affordable Care Act**



### Social Work Update on the Affordable Care Act: What Impact Has the Law Had on Those We Serve?

Four years after its passage, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has become a key component of the nation's safety net. With all major provisions now in effect, the ACA is having a demonstrable impact on the lives of millions of Americans, particularly the populations served by social workers. The law is bringing health care services to many people with no previous attachment to the health care system. It has made prevention and wellness a national priority, and has ushered in a new era of coordinated care for those with chronic illness. It is also providing vital protection against the devastating financial effects of illness and its consequences. Some of the law's major achievements to date are documented below.

#### **14 million people have gained coverage through the health exchanges and Medicaid**

By the end of April 2014, more than eight million people had enrolled in a health plan through the ACA exchanges, and six million more had enrolled in Medicaid or the Children's

Health Insurance Program (CHIP) (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2014, June 4; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014, May 1). The percent of uninsured adults in the U.S. has dropped precipitously, from 17% at the end of 2013 to 13% following the ACA initial enrollment period (Levy, 2014, May 5). It is predicted that by February 2015, between 20 and 25 million Americans will be insured under provisions of the ACA (Blumenthal, 2014, April 1).

#### **Most people who purchased plans in the exchanges are receiving federal subsidies to make insurance affordable**

Through the ACA, tax subsidies are available for low and moderate income people to make health insurance affordable. People with incomes ranging from 100% to 400% of the federal poverty level (\$11,490 to \$45,960 for a single person and \$23,550 to \$94,200 for a family of four) qualify for subsidies that lower their monthly premiums. In the first ACA open enrollment period (October, 2013 – March, 2014), approximately 87% of people who enrolled in coverage through the federal health exchange qualified for premium subsidies. The average monthly subsidy in 2014 is \$264 (Burke, et al., 2014, June 18).

[Click here for full article at socialworkers.org](http://socialworkers.org)

## NASW INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

# *The Global Agenda—Linking Global Social Work to Regional & Local Practice*

### What has international social work to do with social work in my town?

Everything of importance to social workers' hearts and minds according to The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), authors of *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development (The Agenda)* (International Federation of Social Workers et al., 2010). IFSW staff authored *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development: A place to link together and be effective in a globalized world* (International Social Work, Jones & Truell, 2012), a copy of which can be found at <http://ifsw.org/get-involved/agenda-for-social-work>. *The Agenda* presented themes, commitments, and linked global statements with regional diversity. **The authors challenged social workers to help shape the future through professional education, research and action at local, national, regional and international levels.**

### Background about *The Global Agenda*

Over three thousand Social Work Practitioners, Educators, and Development Workers meeting in Hong Kong in June 2010 have decided to launch a global movement that addresses the major challenges of our societies. The delegates agreed that our three organizations should speak out clearly from our experience of issues relevant to the larger community. The delegates reaffirmed the need to organize around major and relevant social issues that connect within and across our profession, [http://cdn.ifsw.org/assets/ifsw\\_84013-7.pdf](http://cdn.ifsw.org/assets/ifsw_84013-7.pdf).

### In response the NASW International Committee reviews *The Agenda* and joins the discussion.

The IFSW, IASSW, and ICSW say the worldwide recession, heightened inequality, extensive migratory movements, increased pandemics and natural catastrophes, and new forms of conflict force us, as social work and social development

professionals and educators, to heighten our awareness of global realities and to act differently. These organizations aim to achieve sustainable, collaborative outcomes drawing on the acknowledged skills of social workers in creating multi-faceted, pragmatic solutions to highly complex problems, both individual and social (Sucharipa, 2001; Sweifach et al., 2010).

Jones and Truell say the three founding organizations represent only the beginning of the collaboration. Social workers need to build alliances with other like-minded leaders and groups to maximize the future of positive social change. **Such change will best occur when we can find common strategies that link our work globally with our work regionally and locally.** Four core themes were highlighted:

- » Social and economic equalities within countries and between regions;
- » Dignity and worth of the person;
- » Environmental sustainability;
- » Importance of human relationships.

Globally agreed-upon definitions provide a basic framework of common social ills and challenges. However, regional definitions emerge due to global complexity and multiple levels in different contexts. The diversity of interpretation of broader global standards in regional contexts is increasing. The authors hope this will result in a dynamic interaction between global and regional strategies. They believe aligning strategies will increase impact and give more effect to the available resources.

The development of regional strategies takes prominence in *The Agenda*. Social work bodies must be visible not only in the United Nations but also in the increasingly significant regional structures, such as the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Organization of African Unity. One of many examples of a specific regional social work response to natural disasters and catastrophes in Asia Pacific was a 2011 conference in Tokyo. It was a place for regional learning as social workers and their communities recovered from devastating earthquakes and tsunamis across the region. It helped to strengthen a regional identity for social workers with their multi-faceted approach.

## Jones and Truell say to those social workers who may question the relevance of a global agenda for practice in their setting:

As people move increasingly from lower-income to higher-income countries to avoid poverty, and the dynamics of migration become more evident, no social worker will escape the reality of globalization. There is also growing evidence of increased migration of social workers and other professionals between countries and regions. To minimize the difficulties for all involved, social workers at both ends of the immigration trajectory now need to talk and collaborate. These approaches to social work will soon be regarded as standard, given the pace of globalization.

These are a few examples from many illustrating why *The Global Agenda* is relevant to local practice contexts: international is local. Making the linkages to support the people we work with or making the linkages to bring global change that will affect local change is now part of the social work job description.

IFSW authors acknowledge global, regional and local challenges faced by social workers and some of the institutional initiatives which IASSW, ICSW, and IFSW have developed. Additionally there are challenges inherent in finding common ground between different specialties within social work especially with the inclusion of social work, social welfare and social development. You can contribute! **They have opened up *The Agenda* process to online debate and are monitoring what is written.** They plan to persist with global action and statements while endeavoring to respect the ethical principles of inclusivity and respect for diversity. They believe social work has to survive and thrive in a global, political and competitive environment. They challenge social workers to assert and acknowledge credit for our unique approach within in interdisciplinary and interprofessional teams.

We therefore commend *The Agenda* process as a genuine, democratic and determined endeavor to provide a focus for social work, to reassert the specific contribution of social work knowledge and skills to a world in social crisis, and to encourage self-confidence among social work practitioners, educators, and policy-makers.

Since IASSW, ICSW, and IFSW, have achieved the linking of global bodies to work together and the existing regional and national structures, Jones and Truell say the next stage involves working at all levels to act upon and fulfill *The Agenda* themes and articulated regional objectives. This can only happen, they say, when all levels participate. **They conclude challenging practitioners, "What has the Global Agenda got to do with you? EVERYTHING. Your contributions will shape the strategies that will be implemented."**

## How can I and the NASW International Committee help shape *The Global Agenda* and make it relevant to my social work practice?

- » Go to IFSW's website to review *The Agenda*. Add your ideas/thoughts of how to make it relevant to your social work practice.
- » Seek out an international experience to benefit from "outside" experiences. That "outside" experience provides insights and solutions that may have never been considered otherwise. What could be more "outside" than outside one's own country?
- » Read NASW International Committee's "Social Workers Reap Benefits from International Experiences."
- » Gain a perspective from another country to help provide insight on ways in which social welfare policies and practices can be improved in your work, in your city.
- » Imbue yourself with a broader vision from local to world-wide (we're all in this together) and hopefully further your cultural humility/cultural competence skills.
- » Attend and participate in International Social Work Conferences, events, discussion forums.
- » Develop links with other social work professionals and organizations to build stronger alliances.
- » Stay informed: Review/write articles on issues and themes of *The Global Agenda*.
- » Promote scientific and academic research and publications that analyze the development and the transformation of the issues raised by *The Global Agenda*.
- » Identify potential organized networks and organizations working on the same areas for partnership.

Contact the NASW International Committee for ideas, comments, suggestions or questions at [srubin@naswdc.org](mailto:srubin@naswdc.org).

# Unaccompanied Migrant Children: Overview & Recommendations

The nation has been riveted by news that as many as 60,000 children ranging in age from a few months to late teens have migrated to the United States from Central America, particularly El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The children’s long trek to the southwest borders of the United States has sparked a humanitarian crisis. Unfortunately, this situation is not short-term and is fraught with many dire bio-psychosocial issues that should galvanize social workers and others from the helping professions to collaborate with the U.S. government to alleviate the crisis.

## Root Causes Triggering Recent Migration from Central American

Mass migration of minors unaccompanied by adults is not unique to Central America, nor is it a new phenomenon.

Children under the age of 18 traveling without their parents or an adult guardian have always been a part of global migration flows. However, the numbers have grown in recent years. Some of the migrants are asylum seekers fleeing war, gangs, or persecution in their home countries while others are victims of sex trafficking or slavery.

Other children may migrate in search of economic opportunities, to join parents or relatives already living in the destination country, or to flee abusive situations in their home countries (Levinson, 2011).

The scale and intensity of this particular migration may have been triggered by significant precipitating factors. According to interviews of the youths by government officials and non-governmental charitable organizations, it is clear that the core reasons for the recent migration wave involve escaping from the illicit drug trade, violence and poverty.

### Unaccompanied Alien Children Encountered by Fiscal Year Fiscal Years 2009-2013; Fiscal Year 2014 through June 15

COUNTRY	FISCAL YEAR 2009	FISCAL YEAR 2010	FISCAL YEAR 2011	FISCAL YEAR 2012	FISCAL YEAR 2013	FISCAL YEAR 2014
EL SALVADOR	1,221	1,910	1,394	3,314	5,990	11,436
GUATEMALA	1,115	1,517	1,565	3,835	8,068	12,670
HONDURAS	968	1,017	974	2,997	6,747	15,027
MEXICO	16,114	13,724	11,768	13,974	17,240	12,146

Statistics Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) U.S. Border Patrol

[Click here for full article at socialworkers.org](#)

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**For more information** Susan Roane, PhD 347-725-0080 (NY)  
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## INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR SPRING 2015 CLASSES

Monday, October 6 | Monday, October 20  
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Sessions will take place at 6pm



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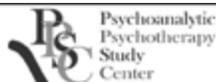
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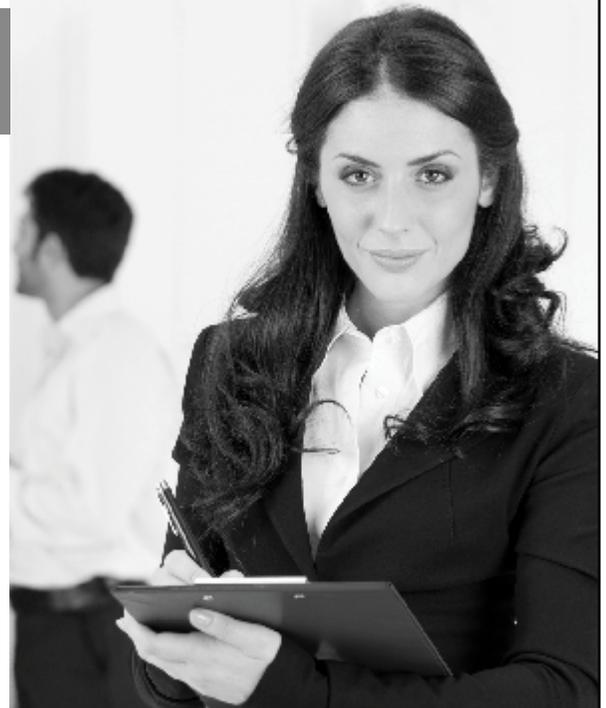
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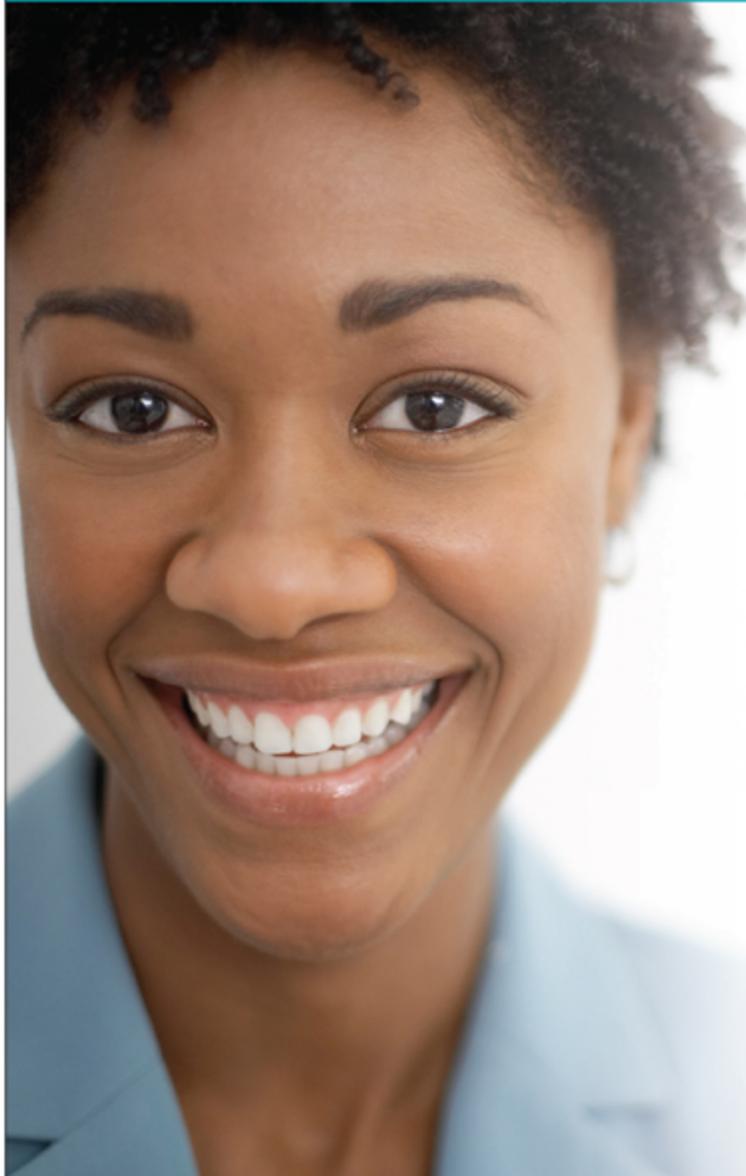
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