and jelly bracelets, which are available in many bright colors. These are an important source of fundraising that serve as a bridge uniting people to fight HIV/AIDS. The bracelet increases awareness, compassion, understanding, and responsibility. Bracelets are available in the United Until There’s A Cure online store: http://www.utac.org/bracelet.shtml

—Vicky Bridgeforth

Dr. Cindy Davis Joins Fulbright Specialist Program

Dr. Cindy Davis, associate professor at the Nashville campus and UTCSW gradu-ate (1989), has been selected to join the Fulbright Specialists Program (FSP). FSP pro-motes linkages between U.S. academics and profession als and their counterparts at universities abroad. This program is designed to award grants to qualified U.S. faculty and professionals in select disciplines. They engage in short-term collaborative proj-ects at higher education institutions in over 100 countries worldwide.

Project activities focus on the strengthening and development needs of higher education institutions. Eligible activities include teacher training, short-term lecturing; conducting seminars, special conferences, or workshops; and collaborating on curriculum planning and institutional and/or faculty development. Dr. Davis spent two weeks at the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Aus-tralia; one week at James Cook University in Queensland, Australia; and one week at the University of Auckland in New Zealand this summer. She gave lectures and presented workshops on cancer research, online teach-ing, and evidence-based practice.

“The Fulbright award is a wonderful oppor-tunity to connect with colleagues around the world. It has been a great opportunity to discuss student exchanges and future col-laboration,” states Davis.

—Kirsten Rogers

Theora Evans Honored as APHA Social Worker of the Year and Social Work Section Chair

When Theora Evans, PhD, MPH, MSW, talks about public health, she speaks with passion. She is known to social workers about public health, she expresses a vision.

Imagine 12 clients who seek service within days of one an-other at a mental health clinic where you are practicing.” She says to a class of aspiring social workers. “Each client is exhibiting signs of depression. Each is recently unemployed. What is your responsibility as the professional service provider when faced with this scenario?” When Evans teaches she seeks to awaken in her students both individual response to clients and broad, community-based response.

Intervening in the individual lives of clients with depression is only one narrow approach to a problem. It is normative for one to experience de-pression as a result of the loss of employment. But when a community is experiencing massive job losses, a systemic intervention may also be appro-priate. Social workers have historically been the ones to see a wider set of solutions that includes advocacy and structural societal change.”

This vision and a lifelong commitment to service in the public health arena will be acknowledged this fall as Evans, associate dean of the Memphis campus, is named 2009–2010 Indiana Evans Pub-lic Health Social Worker of the Year by the Social Work Section of the American Public Health As-sociation (APHA). This award is named for two leaders in the field, Virginia Insley and Juanita Evans, who both played significant roles in the founding of public health social work education, research, and services. Virginia Insley was the first Chief Social Work Officer for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. She served from 1955 to 1980 and Juanita Evans succeeded her, holding the position from 1980 to 2000.

Theora Evans points to Juanita Evans as one of her personal mentors, considering her one of the greatest minds in adolescent health practice. “She showed me what it meant to advocate for youth,” says this year’s honoree. “She was a phenomenal visionary. I am honored to receive this award and I certainly did not expect it. It is, however, a crowning accomplishment for me.”

In the coming year, Theora Evans will also assume the position of chair of the Social Work Section of the APHA. The organization is made up of 25 sections, some of which are practice based while others are research area specific. Social workers can be found in virtually every section of the larger organization.

History reveals that public health and social work evolved simultaneously in the United States. Their emergence was a reaction to unbridled poverty and quality of life issues that arose at the end of the 19th century. Both were concerned with social reform and social justice as well as the special needs of mothers and children and the interrelated problems of child health, dependency, delinquency, and child labor. Social work, nursing, and pediatrics were among the first professions to develop public health advocacy and interdisciplinary practice. Currently, each of the aforementioned professions serve populations nationally and internationally without regard for socioeconomic status.

Evans looks forward to leading the Social Work Section. Her goal is to attract the brightest and best young professionals to take ownership of and shape its future within the association. In addition, she hopes to form relationships with members from other disciplines, celebrating the richness of trans-disciplinary practice while shar-ing the knowledge, research, and skills of various areas of public health.

Theora Evans has worked in the field of pub-lic health social work since early in her career. She was introduced to advocacy/preventative interventions while serving as Children and Adolescents program administrator for a com-prehensive community mental health center in an extremely impoverished catchment area in Chicago. Later she launched the Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition, focusing on the pas-sage of legislation to expand Medicaid coverage to newly diagnosed pregnant mothers while ad-vocating for additional funding of other related health policies. Her transition to higher education was motivated by the desire to help shape the minds of practitioners with a view to understand-ing the balance of client empowerment and community practice.

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