



Two Foundation grants announced

The most recent research projects sponsored by the ASWB Foundation involve two studies that could impact social work education and regulation.

Two promising research projects have been awarded grants by the American Foundation for Research and Consumer Education in Social Work Regulation, ASWB's research foundation. One will study common elements of social work programs in states where licensure pass rates are the highest, and the other is an exploratory study into social work regulation and sociology in Canada.

Research team Deborah Holt and Melinda Pilkinton and researcher Ian Rice submitted the winning applications and were notified in July that their proposals would receive funding.

Awardees: Deborah Holt and Melinda Pilkinton, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

Grant: \$25,000/24 months

Project: "What Works: Identifying Common Elements of Social Work Programs in States with the Highest Licensure Pass Rates"

The research team of Holt and Pilkinton seeks to identify factors common to social work programs in the five states identified by ASWB as having the highest social work licensure exam pass rates. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, the researchers hope to identify heretofore unaddressed information describing various elements of the identified social work programs by interviewing the program directors and surveying the program faculty members in a representative sample of programs in each of the five states. The researchers explained: "Understanding how successful programs are delivering social

work education in 'successful' states will provide valuable information for states that struggle with licensure pass rates and are below the national average."

Awardee: Ian Rice (Ph.D. student), University of New Brunswick, Grand Bay-Westfield, New Brunswick

Grant: \$5,000/9 months

Project: "The Regulation of Social Work in Canada: An Exploratory Study in the Sociology of Professions"

Researcher Ian Rice's study of the professional regulation of social work in Canada seeks to collect information from two specific data sources: a document and legislative review of Canadian social work regulation, and interviews with individuals from the social work community in Canada. The interview method proposed for this study is the semi-structured interview. Themes to be addressed

include regulation; the importance of regulation from the point of view of practitioners, academics, and regulatory bodies; social action and regulation; legislative variation; and issues of globalization and professional regulation from a Canadian perspective. The purpose of the study, he explains, is to “access a dialogue ... that will allow for a clear insight into the nature of the professional regulation of social work and more broadly a discussion of professional regulation in general.”

The Foundation was created by ASWB in the early 1990s when the association was known as the American Association of State Social Work Boards. It published

two monographs in those early years, then went inactive while ASWB focused on other work.

In 2007, the ASWB Board of Directors voted to reactivate the Foundation and fund its proposed grants program. To date, the Foundation has sponsored research on complaints and disciplinary actions taken against social workers, knowledge of licensure and regulation among social work faculty and students in New Jersey, access to clinical supervision in rural areas of Minnesota, the exploration of online information about sanctioned social workers, the importance of licensing among Aboriginal people, and the efficacy of continuing education.