

## **The Social Sciences Training Consortium of East Carolina University**

The Social Sciences Training Consortium (SSTC) of East Carolina University was established in 1993 as part of the development of the Pitt-Edgecombe-Nash Public Academic Liaison (PEN-PAL) Project. Initiated by staff at the N.C. Department of Human Resources, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services, Child and Family Services Section, the *PEN-PAL* Project was funded by a grant from the Center for Mental Health Services. It was one of 22 projects the CMHS funded that year in an initiative to improve the system of care for children with serious emotional problems and their families. To our knowledge, PEN-PAL was the first of these projects to include a university as one of the partners.

The SSTC was established to develop curricula that incorporate systems of care philosophy and techniques, and to provide training, consultation, and technical assistance with the service providers involved in the PEN-PAL Project. Although the PEN-PAL Project “graduated” from federal funding, the work of the SSTC continued to be supported through a contract with the Child and Family Services Section of N. C. DHHS through the year 2000. Currently faculty are seeking funding to continue SOC-related projects, and are continuing the curriculum development efforts.

An interdisciplinary effort, the continuing key ECU departments and faculty include the following: College of Arts and Sciences (Department of Psychology), School of Human Environmental Sciences (Department of Child Development and Family Relations, and the Marriage and Family Therapy Program), School of Medicine (Department of Psychiatry), School of Nursing (Department of Community Nursing Systems), the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice Studies, and a Parent-in-Residence. Past participants have included the School of Education and the Department of Leisure Systems Studies.

The activities of the SSTC have included (1) curriculum development, teaching and training related to systems of care, especially in our pre-service professional degree programs (Nursing M.S., Marriage and Family Therapy M.A., Clinical Psychology M.A., Social Work B.A. and M. W.S. W.) (2) development of interdisciplinary field placements in the community, (3) incorporation of parents as presenters and co-faculty in our courses, (4) service system support, and (5) research and its dissemination through presentations and publications.

The most recent publications by SSTC participants are chapters in *The Handbook of Community-Based Systems of Care: The New Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* (McGinty, Diamond, Brown, & McCammon, 2003) and the *Handbook of Serious Emotional Disturbance in Children and Adolescents* (McCammon, Cook, & Kilmer, 2002). We edited a special issue of *Journal of Family Social Work*, which has been simultaneously published as *Child Mental Health: Exploring Systems of Care in the New Millennium* (Dosser, Handron, McCammon, & Powell, 2001). Additional publications have included theoretical discussion of wraparound treatment process (Handron, Dosser, McCammon, & Powell, 1998), discussion of the challenges and processes involved in interdisciplinary collaboration (Powell, et al., 1999), evaluation of SOC training for Psychiatry Residents (McGinty & Diamond, 2000), and description of our graduate course in interdisciplinary practice in serving children with serious emotional problems and their families (Dosser, Handron, McCammon, Powell, & Spencer, 2001). The SSTC faculty have also been invited presenters at the System of Care Training Institutes and the Center for Mental Health Services Grantee Community Meetings.