

## CONNECTING THE LINKS

In 2004, the **Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Masters in Social Work (MTC MSW)** degree program was conceptualized between three universities with compelling reasons for pursuing an ambitious vision. Austin Peay State University, Middle Tennessee State University and Tennessee State University recognized missing links in the growing need for additional social workers and the lack of available MSW programs with a public service, generalist emphasis in the mid state region.



Each institution already had successful, accredited Bachelors of Social Work degree programs with many dedicated and qualified faculty. By 2005, The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) recommended that the three universities jointly proceed to develop this proposed collaborative MSW program. Since then, the proposal was approved by TBR and THEC; an application for candidacy was submitted to the Council on Social Work Education; and the first TSU MSW cohort was officially enrolled for the August 20, 2009 opening class.

\*Both photos include full and part time students.

\*Bottom Right Photo (11.19.2009). Back Row, Left to Right: M. Abdallah; C. Crawley; D. Groves; S. Doss-Ogbonna; L. Oakes; M. Wright; J. Moore; and L. Garlington. Front Row, Left to Right: G. Smith; T. Arnold; A. Fayne; and S. Thomas-Houston.



Professor Vicki Gardine Williams, Director of the **TSU Social Work Program**.

Her commitment to service and social justice significantly contributed to the unfolding of this initiative.

The mission of the program; “is dedicated to the enhancement of human well-being, diversity, and social justice ... and specifically designed for the working professional.” The program:

- Requires the completion of 60 semester graduate credit hours
- Offers evening courses at the student’s respective home institution
- Shares faculty across three sites
- Provides online courses for cyber-interfacing with other students from all three locations
- Coordinates field placement activities across the mid state region

### **So, what does this program mean to the first class of TSU MSW students?**

*It is: a long time coming for the program and for myself ... a chance to grow ... fulfilling a dream ... a new beginning ... an opportunity to be credentialed ... connecting links ...*



New Applications Accepted 01. – 03. 2010.  
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