

HUMAN SERVICES BULLETIN

August 2019

Newsletter Editors: Callie Snider & Imani Ryan



Instructor, Donna Coonce, Retired

Last semester we said goodbye to one of the outstanding Human Services instructors, **Donna Coonce**. Before she moved on to her next Chapter, I (Imani Ryan) had the opportunity to sit down with Ms. Coonce and talk about her time at Eastern Illinois University (EIU).

In her early life, Coonce had not planned to continue with her education after high school. With the encouragement of a friend, she applied to EIU and found her passion as an educator. Coonce began as a student worker and then, taught full time as an instructor in human services for 20 years.

When asked what she learned by being a part of EIU, she explained, "One of the things that I think I have learned the most is how great this community is. To be a part of something that is so much bigger than who we are, and to be involved with Eastern has just been fantastic." For Coonce, the most rewarding part of being an instructor has been the students. She says, "For me, when I see that light go off in their eyes when I challenge them on a question in the classroom, and to see students develop over the semester, there is nothing greater than that." She has enjoyed being able to touch the lives of her students and reassured me that the students have certainly made an impact on her life as well.

Now that her journey at Eastern has come to an end, she is excited about what she has planned next. Coonce is looking forward to being her own boss, and making her own rules, but most importantly to be able to focus on another passion of hers. "I have a passion to bring whole products to people. I have an artisan heart, and like to do things like landscaping, growing good food, and creating new products". Although we are sad to see Ms. Donna Coonce go, we appreciate all the work that she has done here at EIU for the Human Services and Community Leadership department.

Dr. Jackie Frank received grant funding to offer a mental health training on Saturday, September 7th for students, faculty, and campus partners. She is also organizing a prison re-entry seminar and simulation this fall. See flyers and faculty for more information. For questions and registration info, please contact her at jbfrank@eiu.edu



Human Services Ambassadors

Last fall, the Department Ambassadors (undergraduate and graduate students) became a registered student organization in the fall and worked on a variety of department service events, including visits to area high schools and community colleges, EIU open houses and other events on campus. The purpose of this organization is to improve students' experiences through engagement in departmental and community service, professional development opportunities, and mentoring relationships. With the community service, Ambassadors worked at events at the Charleston Public Library, played games with residents at Hilltop Nursing Home, and volunteered at the Illinois CASA Conference, community partners of the CFLEC. If you would like more information about becoming an Ambassador, please contact Dr. Jill Bowers (jbowers2@eiu.edu)



Ambassadors (Madison Carlson, Tamara Fuller, Abbey Schneid, Dora Tandoh, and Kelsey Blacker) at Illinois CASA Conference with Dr. Mikki Sherwood, HS Department Chair



HSCLAs pictured clockwise: Abbey Schneid, Dr. Jill Bowers (Advisor), Haylee Walker, Blake Hawkins, Tamra Fuller, Madi Carlson, Callie Snider, Becca Brown, and Holly Ruppert; not pictured Dora Tandoh, Imani Ryan, Kelsey Blacker, and Miranda Myers

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Featured Student: Dora Tandoh



After receiving her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Dora Tandoh ventured to EIU from Ghana and completed her Master's Degree in the Department of Human Services last year. She is pursuing her second Master's Degree this semester and will stay on in the department as a Graduate Assistant (GA) for fall semester. Throughout her time as a GA in the last year, Dora has worked with a variety of faculty and helped with Department recruiting events. Department Chair, Dr. Mikki Sherwood, said, "I don't know what we would have done without Dora this year. She played an instrumental role in developing our program." Dr. Jill Bowers said, "Dora has demonstrated an incredible work ethic as a GA and as a student...she takes a lot of initiative, started her own research project, and her work is always of exceptional quality."

Dora received the best student research award at the Illinois Council on Family Relations Conference in April for her original research on students' experiences with menstrual hygiene practices. Dora was originally nervous about making the move to Charleston, Illinois from Ghana. However, she said she had an interest in social entrepreneurship, wanted to start her own nonprofit one day, and she knew that Human Services was a good fit for her. She said it was a good fit with her business background because "getting this degree will help me to really understand the individuals and families I am trying to help." Dora has made many friends and colleagues and now considers Charleston a second home. We are so grateful she is here!

ILCFR Conference Hosted at EIU

The National Council of Family Relations (NCFR) focuses on the diversity of family issues and relations. The mission of NCFR is "to provide an educational forum for family researchers, educators, and practitioners to share in the development and knowledge about families, relationships, establish professional standards, and work to promote family well-being." (www.ncfr.org) The 2019 Illinois Affiliate conference theme was Intergenerational Relationships: Building Bridges for Diverse Families and was hosted in the MLK Union.

Human Services Faculty, Dr. Jacquelyn Frank, was the President Elect for the ILCFR this year and planned this conference. Dr. Frank says "I was very excited about the 2019 conference and it's comprehensive focus across multiple generations of the family. Because the conference was hosted by EIU this year, it offered EIU faculty and students the opportunity to showcase our institution." And, they did. A variety of faculty and students presented at the conference, including but not limited to Dr. Mikki Sherwood, Dora Tandoh, Dr. Jill Bowers, Holly Ruppert, and Becca Brown.

THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES WELCOMES NEW DEAN

The College of Health and Human Services welcomes our new Dean, Dr. Ozlem Ersin! She comes to EIU from George Mason University and brings with her varied and diverse health field experiences and expertise. Faculty are already very excited about Dean Ersin's drive, determination, and dedication to leading and working with faculty in Departmental Developments. We will keep everyone updated on the progress and talk more with Dean Ersin in future newsletters. For more information now, see

<https://www.eiu.edu/media/viewstory.php?action=1323>