The Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative

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Overview

• The How and Why of the Grand Challenges
• The Building of the BUZZ
• Re-Focusing on Policy
• Possible Paths Forward
AASWSW

• Established in 2009 through combined effort of 6 major social work organizations
  – 6 original members has grown to 99
  – Intended to offer our nation a scientific resource for scholarship on social matters (as a complement to NAS, NAE, and other Academies)
Congress regularly asks AASWSW to lead the work to address social problems!
Grand Challenges is the First Major Initiative
Shaping a Science of Social Work

John D. Brooks

Abstract
Social work practice can benefit from a scientific method for judging the effectiveness of interventions, including research on social work practice. The purpose of this paper is to present a scientific method of social work practice as an aid to understanding and improving the practice of social work. The method is described in the context of a specific social work intervention. The method can be applied to any intervention that can be described in terms of a scientific method.

Keywords
Social work, scientific method, research, intervention, evaluation

Science of Social Work
THE SOCIAL IS FUNDAMENTAL
Modifiable Factors That Influence Health
... And Nearly Everything Else

- Climate Change
- Mental Health
- Educational Outcomes
- Peace
- Longevity

- Family Functioning
- Crime
- Opportunity
- Justice
- Brain Development
Identifying and Tackling Grand Challenges for Social Work


OVERVIEW

On August 8-10, 2012, a small group of social work faculty, doctors, and leaders of national social work organizations gathered together at the IslandWood Conference Center on Bainbridge Island, Washington, to grapple with social work’s role in shaping the 21st-century society. The first day of the IslandWood meeting focused on Science of Social Work. The second day, conceptualized and led by Dan and Betsy from the University of Washington, moved from a general discussion of social work science to a proposal that of producing a set of grand challenges to galvanize the field of social work. (Nehman, 2012) “Grand Challenges” are highly ambitious yet achievable goals for society that mobilize a profession, capture the public’s imagination, and inspire new ways of thinking, working, and communicating in science, technology, and practice to accomplish goals. (Khalil, 2012; Kerns, Foylin, & Silver, 2012)

Relevant processes reviewed the context and history of Grand Challenges and discussed promising approaches, benefits, and risks involved in the development of Grand Challenges for Social Work. A recent case example—the National Academy of Engineering’s Grand Challenges Initiative—was presented and reviewed. Historical examples of social work’s “grand accomplishments” were offered, providing evidence of social work’s capacity to bring science and knowledge to bear on tackling seemingly intractable social challenges. Processes then described several problem areas that could lead us towards the development of grand challenges. These were not to build a list of grand challenges, but rather to explore the user’s potential to greatly benefit society and propel the field forward.

By the end of the day, participants were in agreement that the creation of a grand challenges for social work initiative might be both galvanizing for the profession and counter one discipline’s primary mission of innovation, who work together to accomplish shared and competing societal needs. Grand Challenges could capture the interest of the general public—while advancing the science and practice of social work. Participants acknowledged that adopting a grand challenges approach has risks: a place demands on individual and organizations—and resources are not limitless. Yet the potential benefits may far outweigh the risks. The theory of social work offers many examples of great interventions, such as the Children’s Bureau and Infant Mortality campaigns and the Program of Assistance to University Treatment, which can serve as models for addressing contemporary grand challenges. If the practical issues involved in developing such...
Big, compelling and important

Amenable to analysis, assessment, improvement

Demonstrable progress in a decade

Cross-sector interdisciplinary collaboration

Significant innovation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensure healthy development for all youth</th>
<th>Create social responses to a changing environment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Close the health gap</td>
<td>Harness technology for social good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stop family violence</td>
<td>Promote smart decarceration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advance long and productive lives</td>
<td>Reduce extreme economic inequality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eradicate social isolation</td>
<td>Build financial capability for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End homelessness</td>
<td>Achieve equal opportunity and justice</td>
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Successful GCs Launch at SSWR 2016!
Grand Challenges Progress

After the Launch at SSWR, 2016 - we are generating a BUZZ.

Major Social Work Organizations are on board, and actively supportive (CSWE, GADE, NASW, NADD, NSWM, SSWR).
Social Change Through Practice

Initially Practice Focused

– Inventing New Interventions
– Going to Scale with Existing Interventions
Re-Focusing on Policy

[Diagram showing the policy cycle with phases such as citizen control, transparency, monitoring, evaluation, design, participation, deliberative democracy, open innovation, and open gov principles.]
Where Are We and Where May We Be Going?
Beaulieu Vineyard
Wine Dinner
95++ per Bottle
SINCE 1900
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2016
6:30 PM ARRIVAL / 7:00 PM DINNER
SOCIAL INNOVATION for AMERICA’S RENEWAL
Ideas, Evidence, Action
A new poll shows that many voters have strong opinions on these issues despite the fact that we provide no useful contextual data.

I've got to stop watching scary shows right before bedtime.
Social Change: Science-to-Policy

Filling Out the Current Evidence-Based Policy Making Framework

• Evidence Based Practice Expansion

Analyzing the Strength of Evidence of Solutions in Comparison to the Sizes of the Problems

Articulating the Risk and Resilience Perspective and ROI of programs
Address Broad Array of Social Policies

- Age friendly communities
- Climate change and urban resilience
- Unlocking government data to guide prevention
- Prison sentencing and solitary confinement
- Employment creation and wealth building
- Zero tolerance policies in schools
This Opportunity

1. Begin to articulate a policy agenda that captures our profession’s attention (beyond narrower professional interests)
2. Start strategies to engage elected officials and government agencies
3. Communicate to engage external audiences, energize practitioners, and inspire new students to study social work
Broader Set of Policy Tools

Beyond Advocacy Based on SW Values

– Interprofessional coalition building
– Integrated practice, research, and policy networks
– Social media impact for scientific solutions
– Mobilizing social work entities with a new unity of focus
That the profession will be unified in recognizing these 12 challenges and in its support for efforts to achieve measurable impact in the next decade!
Social Work is credited for lifting a Social Agenda and championing compelling policy changes. Social Work is organized nationally to advocate and influence the policy process. Social Workers are seen as critical to policy making. Social Work Science gains new respect.
that Corporations... … adopt *Grand Challenges*
Strong National Practice Networks Emerge

BUILDING BLOCKS NOW IN PLACE:

GC Network Leads

Webinars will be scheduled with each Network presenting research and sharing best practices

*Thread Through* strategy with events at SSWR, CSWE, NASW, GADE, and in regions
Campuses and Centers Adopt Grand Challenges

A summit launches multi-pronged partnership to end homelessness in LA using and supportive services to business and technology solutions, panelists framework for tackling one of society’s most intractable problems.

Wampler • MAY 2, 2015

From the public, private and nonprofit sectors gathered at USC on April 27 for a summit to launch a sustained, collaborative partnership to end homelessness in Los Angeles and serve other communities.

Our city and our county to lead the way, President C. L. Max Nikias said. Great opportunities around the world face homelessness today. The challenges are great, he said, but they can only be addressed by common leadership of the great institutions of our city, philanthropy, and governments.

Related stories

Writing students break away from classroom to help the homeless

How do we make Los Angeles a great city?
Curriculum to Recruit New Students

Program Overview

The University of Southern California Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program is designed to prepare scholar-practitioners to harness innovative solutions to solve real-world problems. Our goal is to bring social workers into the greater public discourse as they explore ways to create a stronger, fairer society and ensure basic human rights for people everywhere.

The program brings together students from a range of professional backgrounds to tackle the 12 Grand Challenges, an initiative led by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare. Each challenge is tied to issues — social
Accelerated Knowledge Building

//alliance1.org/ending-homelessness

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FAMILIES IN SOCIETY

Strengthening social work and those it serves through research, practice, and theory that propels lasting positive change with families and their communities.

ENDING HOMELESSNESS: A GRAND CHALLENGE FOR TRANSFORMING PRACTICE & POLICY
People often overestimate what will happen in the next two years and underestimate what will happen in ten.

Bill Gates
Steps From Imagining to Success

Visualize the Steps to Take

– Networks
– Policy Development
– Policy Action
– Communication
Networks

- Differentiation of Roles
- Mini-Strategic Plans
- Operations
- Integration with Other Organizations
Policy Development

Expression in Policy Framework Terms

– Equity of Purpose and Result
– Efficiency of Ideas
– Enhancing Liberty
– Security & Safety
Policy Action

Mobilize Rights and Facts
Anticipate Next Moves
Build on Existing Platforms (NASW, CSWE, CRISP)
Partner with Influentials
Communication

- Existing Networks and Tools

Join the movement at: www.grandchallengesforsocialwork.org