

# BARRY

## The GRANT Seeker

*A quarterly spotlight recognizing excellence in grantsmanship by a Barry University employee*

### Mitchell Rosenwald, PhD, and Agnes Shine, PhD Making Quick Work of Becoming Fast Friends

They had never met. They had less than one month to pull it off. Their work headquarters was set up in a Barnes and Noble bookstore. Yet, despite these challenges, in September 2012 Drs. Mitch Rosenwald and Agnes Shine were awarded a major subcontract from Kids In Distress Inc. (KID) to serve as evaluators on one of the nation's largest federally-funded research studies on child welfare.

Dr. Rosenwald, an associate professor of social work, and Dr. Shine, an associate professor and coordinator of the school psychology program, share a commitment to protecting and providing for children. Now, thanks to a new partnership and funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), these two uniquely-qualified faculty members will work together to inform the national conversation on child welfare and deepen our understanding of the impact of sustainable housing and supportive services on the well-being of our most vulnerable children.

Barry University was approached by KID in July 2012 to join a consortium of more than 30 community-based housing and service providers in Broward County known as the HEART (Housing, Empowerment, Achievement, Recovery & Triumph) Alliance for Sustainable Families. The HEART Alliance needed to engage an evaluator to round out its research team, which was poised to respond to a five-year, multimillion dollar opportunity from HHS to explore safe housing solutions for at-risk children. When Dr. Rosenwald learned of the opportunity, he responded immediately – he was in!

Dr. Rosenwald was experienced with the service population, having worked for a



number of years with the Baltimore-based Child Protective Services, conducting investigations into allegations of child abuse and neglect. Through his work with the Guardian ad Litem program and a Broward County homeless shelter, he was familiar with the staggering local statistics related to child welfare: 94 percent of the 414 homeless children in Broward County are members of a homeless family, and there are currently 1,949 children in the local welfare system.

Recognizing the breadth of the study the HEART Alliance was proposing, Dr. Rosenwald knew he could use the help of someone with extensive experience evaluating complex, long-term studies. He contacted the grants team for guidance and was connected with Dr. Agnes Shine. Dr. Shine was well-positioned to partner with Dr. Rosenwald on the study, having recently completed the evaluation for a \$1.4 million research study examining 10th grade public school students at risk for HIV/AIDS and substance abuse issues.

Both fully committed, Drs. Rosenwald and Shine set off to develop a comprehensive process, implementation, and outcome evaluation plan worthy of submission. The pair worked diligently for two weeks, connecting on campus and working many late nights, to write the evaluation plan. The final proposal was submitted to HHS in August 2012.

Less than 45 days later, the HEART Alliance learned that its proposed study was one of only five in the nation awarded funding –

\$1 million per year for five years. The program will provide housing subsidies and evidenced-based support services to 50 at-risk families with children and will evaluate, over a five-year period, the effectiveness of supportive housing to reduce the number of children admitted to the welfare system. Subsequently, Barry University will receive a \$451,908 subcontract to facilitate all components of the study evaluation and disseminate the findings to a national audience. The award represents one of the largest grant-related subcontracts in the university's history.

The HHS award served to solidify Drs. Rosenwald and Shine's commitment to the service population and to each other. Back in September, upon learning the HEART Alliance was awarded funding, the two evaluators spent little time celebrating. Instead, they got right back to work because the lives of 50 families and, ultimately, thousands of children depend on their efforts.

*Barry thanks you*

*It's people like this who move Barry forward. If you are interested in pursuing a grant opportunity or have any questions, please contact the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs at 305-899-3072.*