One of the ways we stay connected with our alumni is through this newsletter. It is an old-fashioned, but tried-and-true form of connecting with our alumni and updating people on achievements and changes in what’s happening with NIU Sociology. I think of the newsletter as geared toward keeping connected with our many alumni throughout the community region and across the nation and world.

Staying connected – learning about the diverse and many pursuits of our alumni network – is a challenge for the department and for NIU. Once students graduate, some keep in touch with favorite professors; some stay in the DeKalb area; some come back to campus for football homecoming weekend or other events; but very many of us are so busy with our own lives and the day-to-day pursuits of working and living well that we lose touch over time. But even if we lose touch or are less connected than we want to be, we know that you are doing great things that make a difference in your life and in the communities you live in. That’s why we decided to dedicate the entire newsletter this year to sharing information about NIU Sociology alumni.

In a typical graduating class, more than 125 students graduate with either a B.A. or B.S. in Sociology from NIU. And in the 14 years I have been in the department as a faculty member, well over 1,500 students have become alumni of the program! That’s a lot of graduates. There’s no way we can feature all of you, so what is contained in this edition of the Social Network is a snapshot of some of the alumni who have kept in touch with us in some way. Whether we’ve heard from you recently, or it’s been a while, or you haven’t contacted us since you graduated, we’d love to hear what you are up to and would love to feature you in future newsletters.

This past year, our alumnus, Andrew Traver, Director of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) was honored by Dean Chris McCord and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences with one of a small number of Distinguished Alumni Awards presented annually. He graduated back in the 1980s. Other program alumni from more recent decades are featured in this newsletter. We are proud of all the accomplishments of all of our alumni, whether you graduated 50 years ago or last year. One of the most rewarding and eye-opening experiences of faculty is to learn about all the things that our former students have achieved. Seeing students go from young adults working their way through classes in DuSable and the SOCQRL to graduating, finding work, going to graduate school, having a family, being promoted, being fired, switching career paths, and all of the twists and turns of adult life is amazing and in many cases among the most gratifying for me.

Kirk Miller
Associate Dean for Academic Administration, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Associate Professor in Sociology and former Sociology Chair
Lucy Andich
Farmer, Sofair Farms B.A., 2006

Lucy earned her B.A. in Sociology in 2006 and now works as a farmer at Sofair Farms. She says, “My environmental sociology class was the best! It helped me get to where I am today and it dictates my plans for the future.”

She also says that one of the things that stood out about her time at NIU was that she received a well-rounded education with excellent professors who are willing to go the extra mile. Career possibilities expand with this degree.

She tells current students, “Listen carefully in your qualitative and quantitative methods class. The skills you learn will definitely help you in your future career.”

Brittany Baker
Operations, Wheaton Park District B.A., 2007

Brittany graduated with her B.A. in Sociology in 2007. She is now working with the Wheaton Park District in operations.

She notes that her experiences in sociology have helped her dealing overall with people, bosses, government environment and the public.

Brittany believes that sociology helps her throughout everyday life. “Knowing how to handle groups of people [gives] you an insight into the way they work.”

Lynn Bergstrom
Case Manager, Aetna Insurance B.A., 2004

Lynn earned her B.A. in Sociology in 2004 and is now a case manager working for Aetna Better Health Insurance Company.

She recommends Sociology as a major. “It is a very broad subject and you can get into many careers in this field.”

She advises current students that, “[Sociology] is a general degree but specialize in an area that you are really passionate about. Mine was studying health and aging and it got me two different jobs that were and are very satisfying.”

Michael Blasi
Commercial Property Claims, Farmers Insurance B.A., 1985

Michael earned his B.A. in Sociology in 1985 and now works for Farmers Insurance in Commercial Property Claims.

He says that his degree choice opened his mind to the many ways people interact with one another. “It also prepared me for my Peace Corps experience in 1998.”

He advises current students, “Most jobs won’t be directly tied to Sociology, so don’t sweat it. You are prepared better as a generalist and can be an asset to many organizations.”
Tamara Brion
Manager, Accenture  B.A., 1990

Tamara earned her B.A. in 1990 and is now a Manager at Accenture. She says that during her time at NIU, “Herb Rubin was a great mentor! Most of my career has focused on managing change efforts and I leveraged my...degrees to support my professional activities - striving to marry the organization’s objectives with the people’s needs.”

She tells current students, “Be agile, open to new roles and possess skills/knowledge that cannot be offshored—and always strive to do your best regardless of the type of work you do.”

Joyce Bussell

Joyce graduated with her B.A. in Sociology in the fall of 1970. She is now self-employed as an author, writing computer programming textbooks.

When she was asked about what advice she would give to current students, she said, “I doubt whatever job you start with will be your job in 20, 30, or 40 years, so the most important thing is to learn to think critically and learn how to learn. If learning how to learn is easier because you love the topics taught in Sociology classes, then so much the better.”

David Clark

David received his B.A. in 1986 and went on to earn his M.A. in 1988. He now works for the Village of Glencoe as Director of Finance. When reminiscing about his time at NIU, he says, “I think that NIU Sociology greatly expanded my thinking and my ability to understand the motivation of people as customers [and] business competitors. There is such a tremendous value in understanding theories of social interaction and organizational theory and those theories have so much relevance in the workplace. Sociology as an education of understanding is more important now than ever.”

His advice for current students is to be balanced. “There is tremendous power in a sociology degree. Such a degree with a technical minor would be very valuable in the [job] marketplace.”
Danielle Clemons  
Job Coach/Case Manager, Mers Goodwill-St. Louis  
M.A., 2016

Danielle earned her M.A. in 2016 and is currently working at Mers Goodwill - St. Louis as a Job Coach/Case Manager. She says that Sociology prepared her for her job because, “The courses were very challenging, but they prepared me for a challenging work environment. The professors encouraged me to never give up. I learned not only the information that related to my sociology degree, but professionalism and life skills as well.”

She benefited from pursuing her degree at NIU. “Developing critical thinking skills, learning to communicate ideas effectively (both orally and in writing), and my degree prepared me for a range of career paths!”

Willie Coppernoll  
Retired Pastoral Counselor  
B.A. Sociology, 1978

Willie received his B.A. in Sociology in 1978. While he is now retired, he used his degree to become a pastoral counselor, relying heavily on his research into family systems, social psychology and racism. In his words, he used his time in the sociology department as, “A springboard for exploring the social universe, for application [in] my career, and for furthering my dedication to higher learning”

His advice for current students? “Absorb [the] content of your courses; practice skills of research...soak it all up. Your sociological training will emerge throughout your years in your chosen profession, to empower and enrich your endeavors.”

Diana Cruz  
Bilingual Behavioral Health Outpatient Counselor  
B.A., 2012

Diana graduated from NIU with a B.A. in Sociology and a minor in Family and Child Studies in 2012. She continued her education by earning her Master of Social Work degree from Aurora University in Aurora University in 2014. Since then, Diana has had the had the opportunity to explore multiple sectors within within the field such as foster care, psychotherapy and psychiatric inpatient care. Currently, she works for the Association of Individual Development in Illinois.

Looking back at her time at NIU, she says, “The NIU Sociology Department... provided me with the necessary knowledge and tools to feel confident throughout my master’s program and casework in the field alike.”
Ilana Demantas
Faculty, Columbus State University  
M.A., 2010

Ilana earned her M.A. in Sociology in 2010 and is currently a faculty member at Columbus State University. She says, “My time at NIU truly helped me develop into the scholar I am today.

“I enjoyed working with faculty one-on-one. I got an opportunity to develop my own research and publish research with my faculty mentor. Professors Kristen Myers, Kirk Miller and Diane Rodgers were and remain invaluable mentors to me,” she says.

She also says, “One of the biggest benefits [of going to NIU] is a small program, one-on-one attention and getting an opportunity to publish co-authored research.”

Ulysses Diaz
Bilingual Counselor  
B.A., 2009

Ulysses graduated with a B.A. in Sociology and a minor in Latino/Latin American Studies. He received his Master’s in Social Work from UIC and holds a tenured-track position at Waubonsee Community College in Sugar Grove, Illinois.

When reflecting on how his time at NIU prepared him for his current career, Diaz says, “I am in a very privileged position to support the community I grew up in. My experience and knowledge obtained from the Sociology Department aided in keeping my intention on a path of service. As an advisor for a student organization, I am now on the other side of the coin, helping students polish their understanding and perspective to be of service and dig deeper to the reality of education.”

Ashley Dorsey
Public Works Director, Village of Lincolnwood  
B.S., 2005

Ashley earned her B.S. in Sociology in 2005 and is now the Public Works Director with the Village of Lincolnwood.

“The Sociology program helped prepare me for Master of Public Administration program at NIU,” she said.

Her advice for current students? “Look at master degree programs that can provide you with professional experience.”
William Feithen
Chief of Police, Monmouth Police Department  B.A., 1975

William received his B.A. in sociology in 1975. He is now the Chief of Police with the Monmouth Police Department. He says, “Being in law enforcement, it is important for officers to look beyond where they came from and understand others roots, the influences that impact those they serve, and better understand diversity in this world.”

When asked if he had any advice for current students, he said, “Apply what you learn, keep an open mind and continue to take advantage of learning opportunities. But most importantly, always remember that every human being has something to offer and you can learn something from anyone.”

Alberto Galvez
Service Coordinator/Case Manager  B.A., 2012

Alberto currently works for Community Support Services in Brookfield, Illinois as a Service Coordinator/Case Manager.

He helps individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities reach their full potential in life!

When asked how NIU helped prepare him for his current job, Alberto responded, “Learning about inequalities in my sociology courses, paired with the effect I now know that volunteering has on the community, NIU Sociology prepared me to be a leader in my community.”

Anna Hansen
Director of Sales and Account Management, Hines & Associates  B.A., 1991

Anna graduated from NIU with a B.A. in Sociology in 1991. She is currently the director of sales and account management at Hines & Associates.

She says, “The sociology department and professors were very helpful in course selection and direction to accomplish my degree in a reasonable time period.”

She also credits her sociology degree as a good base for her job, having worked with the same company for 14 years, and being promoted several times over the course of her time there.

Her advice for other students? “Work with the department, get to know your professors and attend the classes.”

She goes on to say, “Coursework along the path of a general focus in sociology makes for a great base to go into most any business.”
Keith Higdon  
SVP, Partnership Services, ESIS Inc.  
B.S., 1994

Keith graduated with his B.S. in Sociology in 1994 and now is an SVP, Partnership Services with ESIS Inc. He says, “My degree created a foundation of knowledge regarding group behavior that I encounter both within the organization and across claims. In addition, the growing emphasis on analytics in the industry allows me to utilize my training in Sociology to develop hypotheses around casual relationships across claim, claimant and organizational characteristics with claim outcomes.”

He tells current students to ask questions and be engaged. “Sociology provides a unique perspective in the business world that you can leverage far beyond traditional career paths.”

Deborah (Gantz) Jacobson  
Public Aid Investigator,  
State of Illinois  
B.S., 1994; M.A., 2002

Deborah received her B.S. in Sociology in 1994, and went on to get her M.A. in Sociology in 2002. She now works for the State of Illinois Office of the Inspector General as a Public Aid Investigator. She said that one of the ways the Sociology Department helped prepare her for her current job was the variety of classes that were offered detailing different topics related to criminology and sociology.

She adds, “Experience with an internship or working in the field of sociology was something that set NIU apart from other schools.”

Brian Kreiling  
Probation Officer, DuPage County  
B.S., 1995

Brian graduated with his B.S. in sociology in 1995 and is now a probation officer with DuPage County. He says, “My criminology courses prepared me for my career as a probation officer. Those courses taught me about criminal delinquency, behavior, and thinking. I was better prepared to deal with criminals and to better understand their motivation and patterns of behavior.”

When asked what he would tell current students in the sociology department, he responded, “I would tell them to figure out what career fits their interests and to figure out the best way to get the degree that will allow them to get that career.”
William Leuellen  
**Human Services Caseworker, State of Illinois**  
B.A., 2006

William earned his B.A. in sociology in 2006 and now works for the State of Illinois as a Human Services Caseworker. He says that his sociology degree prepared him for his career. “It helped me realize everyone has their own story and circumstances. It also helped me realize when issues need to be corrected via changes in society or by holding the individual accountable.”

His advice for current students? “Be ready to work hard before and after reaching your goals. Don’t assume your degree is going to open all doors for you.”

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**Ophra Leyser-Whalen**  
**Asst. Professor, University of Texas at El Paso, Department of Sociology**  
Ph.D., M.A., 1999

After receiving her M.A. in Sociology from NIU, Ophra Leyser went on to complete a Ph.D. from the University of Kansas. Ophra had a two-year postdoctoral research fellowship at the University of Texas Medical Branch. She then became an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Texas at El Paso.

She says, “I felt like my M.A. training at NIU prepared me very well for my Ph.D. work in sociology. The TA guidance I got from the late Kay Forest was invaluable for my growth as a teacher that continued into my Ph.D. work and current Assistant Professor position.”

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**Ariel McClay**  
**Executive Team Leader, Target**  
B.A., 2014

Ariel earned her B.A. in Sociology in 2014. She has gone on to become an executive team leader at Target. One of the best ways her time studying sociology has helped her, she says, is that now she has the ability to speak to her degree, which has been the greatest help. “Some people don’t respect the degree until you can link it to everyday life and show them the degree at work in the workplace or just in their personal lives,” she says.

Ariel is currently pursuing her MBA, and says, “Thanks to my undergraduate degree my graduate courses are much easier. A lot of my classmates [who] were business undergraduates struggle to write the papers required in grad school. But papers at that level are nothing new to me thanks to the structure of the Sociology program.”
Fred Markowitz, Ph.D.  
Professor,  
NIU Department of Sociology  
B.S., 1986; M.A., 1990

Fred earned his Ph.D. in Sociology from the State University of New York at Albany. In 1998, he became an Assistant Professor of Sociology at NIU and in 2003, he was promoted to Associate Professor. Just this past year, Fred was promoted to full Professor. “Like many students at NIU, my parents were not college graduates and had limited economic means. However, they valued reading, the arts, critical examination of society and encouraged me to further my education. What helped draw me in further was the passion of many professors when they talked about sociological theories, inequality or even research methods.

“As a native of Chicago with immigrant grandparents, learning about ethnic patterns of migration, urban dynamics, religiosity, the structure of the family, and the power elites that rule America allowed me to better understand the larger forces that affected my life. This is, of course, what is referred to as the ‘sociological imagination’. I enjoyed reading research articles and giving class presentations. I felt compelled to keep going, eventually earning my Ph.D. at the State University of New York at Albany.

“The highlights of my career as a sociologist come from getting my research articles published and acknowledged by scholars worldwide. Being awarded a two-year NIMH fellowship at the University of Wisconsin after completing my Ph.D. was one of my proudest accomplishments. Meetings with colleagues at places like Columbia, Yale, Rutgers and Washington, D.C. are among my favorite experiences. While it can be a lot of extra work, I am also fortunate to be asked to review federal research grants and serve on journal editorial boards. The undergraduate in me is still somewhat surprised that they want to know what I think. The best teaching moments come from a good class discussion, or when students tell me that they now have greater insight into issues such as crime or homelessness, or that quantitative methods ‘wasn’t as bad as they thought!’”
Patrick Murphy
Account Manager, Fonterra USA Inc. B.A., 2009

Patrick graduated with his B.A. in sociology in 2009 and is now working for Fonterra USA Inc. as an account manager.

He says, “My time in the sociology department shaped and refined my ability to write analytically as well as communicate effectively in many different ways.”

His advice to current students? “Network! Take advantage of the networking events Northern hosts, specifically the sociology department.”

Megan Murray
Retired Federal Agent, Department of Homeland Security B.S., 1988

Megan received her Bachelor of Science in Sociology in 1988. She is now a retired federal agent with the Department of Homeland Security and is also a retired lieutenant colonel with the U.S. Army Reserves. She says, “Having a Sociology/Criminology [background] helped me get selected to my first choice Army Branch: Military Police.”

Megan notes one of the benefits of pursuing a sociology degree as “it is a broad subject studying group behavior which can benefit you in any career working with people and solving problems in a group setting.”

Jeffrey Padilla

Jeffrey received his B.A. in Sociology in 1989, and is now a lieutenant in the Illinois State Police.

He says, “The courses and instructors were wonderful. [They] helped me prepare for entry into a career in law enforcement and to move on to a graduate degree.” Jeffrey’s advice to students currently enrolled in the sociology program is to finish your degree and consider moving on to a graduate degree. It definitely helps in today’s competitive career market.

Cassandra Pilz
Associate Trainer, Panera Bread B.A., 2006

Cassandra earned her B.A. in Sociology in 2006 and is currently working at Panera Bread as an associate trainer. When considering what makes sociology a good choice for a major, she said, “Sociology is great when pursuing any career choice. It helps you look at situations in qualitative and quantitative perspectives.”

Her advice to current students? “Be observant. Soak up everything you can from your professors. You never know how often you will use the information you learn at NIU.”
Delilah Portalatin
Life Coach, Keshet MYLIFE Residential Program
B.A., 2010

Delilah earned her B.A. in Sociology in 2010. She now works at Keshet’s MYLIFE Residential Program as a life coach. When asked how NIU prepared her for her job, she said, “The program prepared me for my Master’s in Forensic Psychology. Particularly, Jim Thomas’ corrections class was most beneficial. The visits to correctional facilities [were] life changing.” She said that the field experiences she gained were one of the things that made her time in the sociology department worthwhile.

Her advice for current students? “Participate in the internship class and join a club geared toward sociology, those are the experiences you’ll discuss in an interview.”

Stacy (Knoor) Rapach
Child Welfare Specialist, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
B.A., 2001; M.A., 2004

Stacy earned her B.A. in Sociology in 2001 and her M.A. in Sociology in 2004. She is now working at Lutheran Social Services of Illinois in Rockford as a Child Welfare Specialist. When looking back at her time at NIU, she notes, “My undergraduate degree had an emphasis in criminology, so that helped me in my interaction with all levels of the child welfare system. And the flexibility, with both the Bachelor’s and Master’s program having internship opportunities helped me immensely, both with interviewing as well as deciding what I wanted to do career-wise.”

Natalie Reese
Licensed Professional Counselor, Kettle Moraine Counseling
B.A., 2010

Natalie earned her B.A. in 2010 and is now a Licensed Professional Counselor at Kettle Moraine Counseling.

She says, “Sociology was able to give me a more broad perspective of society’s role on the individual. I am able to give clients a different viewpoint by helping them look at their role within their community and how their community may play a role in some of their struggles.”

Her advice for current students? “Take a wide variety of electives. Strongly consider pursuing graduate studies to open more options.”
Krystle Reynolds  
HR Business Partner, Wiss Janney,  
Elstner Associates Inc.  
B.A., 2008

Krystle received her Sociology B.A. in Sociology in 2008 and now works for Wiss Janney, Elstner Associates Inc. as an HR Business Partner. She says that her sociology degree prepared her for her job because she “understand[s] that almost all behavior is influenced in some way, either by internal or external factors. If anything, I’d say that studying sociology made me more empathetic. I’m service-minded and want to help people in the ways that they want, and need to be helped.”

She tells current students, “Keep an open mind. Sociology is everywhere. You don’t need to be a social worker to put your degree to use.”

Fred Roberts  
Semiretired Director of Transportation  
B.A., 1971

Fred earned his B.A. in Sociology in 1971. He is now semiretired as the Director of Transportation. He says that his degree was beneficial. “Sociology helps one to understand what groups of people think and thereby gives one insight into what may motivate colleagues and/or employees.”

He tells current students, “Sociology will give you the foundation on which to build any career, be it in business, law enforcement or education.”
Louise Roebuck  
**Daycare Licensing Representative, Illinois DCFS **  
**B.A., 1974**

Louise earned her B.A. in 1974 and now works for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services as a Daycare Licensing Representative.

She says, “Majoring in Sociology prepared me for all the positions I have had with DCFS. It gave me a basic understanding and equipped me with the skills to learn more.”

Her advice to current students is, “Go volunteer in a soup kitchen, boys and girls club, homeless shelter and any place like that that takes you out of your comfort zone.”

Stephen Rose  
**Retired Firefighter/EMT, Oak Park Fire Department**  
**B.S., 1976**

Stephen graduated with his B.S. in Sociology in 1976 and is a retired firefighter/EMT with the Oak Park Fire Department.

He says that training in Sociology, “Helped me with interacting with people on many levels: medical work, firefighter interactions, generally dealing with the public, dealing with individuals who exhibited social and psychological shortcomings and dealing with individuals with drug dependency issues.”

He tells current students, “While Sociology is a field that offers many opportunities for those who have advanced degrees, for those who completed their education with a bachelor’s degree, you can use your knowledge to perform in many occupations.”

Colleen Ross  
**Victim Specialist, FBI**  
**B.A., 1997**

Colleen graduated from NIU with a B.A. in Sociology in 1997. After working as a police officer, she went on to become a victim specialist for the FBI.

She credits Dr. Miller’s and Dr. Thomas’ classes, along with Jack King’s support of her internship at Lisle Police Department as setting her on the path to her current career.

Colleen advises current students to “Do internships and ride-alongs/shadowing to truly be sure [they] are going into the right field.” Once they enter the job market, she says to “Make sure to consider retirement packages and benefits- we are often so wrapped up in getting a job that this is lost in the process.”
**Lauren Schmidt**  
_Behavioral Therapist, Minnesota Autism Center_  
_B.A., 2012_

Lauren earned her B.A. in Sociology in 2012. She is now a Behavioral Therapist at the Minnesota Autism Center.

She says that sociology helped prepare her for her occupation. “Courses on race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality all helped me to gain a greater understanding of the people around me in terms of how they perceive the world and others around them as well as what struggles they face on a daily basis. [All of these have] helped me to connect on a much more personal level with my clients and their families.”

She goes on to say, “A degree in sociology can provide more flexibility career-wise as it applies to a variety of different career paths as well as everyday situations and interpersonal connections.”

**Kristin Semelroth**  
_Therapist, Summit Center for Mental Health_  
_B.A., 1989_

Kristin earned her B.A. in Sociology in 1989. She now works for the Summit Center for Mental Health as a therapist.

She says, “My sociology degree was a solid foundation. I furthered my education and was then able to obtain a career in the social service industry.”

She goes on to say, “Any education is a benefit. Sociology allows a person to have a certain overview of the world in which we live. Many careers can come from a degree in Sociology from mental health to politics to law to research or teaching.”

**Cheryl Stransky**  
_Retired, Social Security Administration_  
_B.A., 1966_

Cheryl received her B.A. in sociology in 1966, and has now retired from the Social Security Administration.

When she looks back at her time in college, she says, “I was very immature and not a good student, but because some of the professors and classes parts of our world were opened to me that I was never aware [of].”

Her advice for current students? “During this day and age with so much competition for jobs, plan on getting an advanced degree and master a second language.”
Jessica Syverson
Hospice Social Worker, Mercy Health Systems  B.A., 2012

Jessica received her B.A. in sociology in 2012. She is now employed by Mercy Health System as a hospice social worker. When looking back at her experience as a sociology major at NIU, she says, “Sociology allowed me to explore my interests in the human services field. It put me in motion to continue my education in the field of social work.”

When asked to give some advice to current sociology students, she said, “Seek out your passions, and make sure you follow your own interests. This will make your career more enjoyable.”

Andrew Traver
Fifth Civilian Director,
Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS)  B.A., 1985

Andrew earned his bachelor’s degree in Sociology and Criminal Justice in May 1985. He now works for the Naval Criminal Investigative Service as their fifth civilian director. After earning his bachelor’s, Traver joined the navy and graduated third in his class from officer candidate school in Newport, Rhode Island. He worked for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for 26 years as a special agent in many different locations across the country before becoming the director of NCIS in 2014.*

* information taken from NIU Today, Feb. 3 2014

Jesslyn Truesdale
Mental Health Court Probation Officer,
DeKalb County Mental Health Court  B.A., 2015

Jesslyn earned her B.A. in Sociology in May 2015. She now works for the DeKalb County Mental Health Court as a mental health court probation officer. “[The internships in sociology] course provided me not only with the opportunity to use the knowledge gained from my coursework in sociology in an applied setting, but [I] also receive[d] hands-on job training and networking that could be used to start my professional career.”

One of the things that she said was a benefit of NIU’s sociology department is that, “All the professors in this program challenge their students and encourage them to ask hard questions and seek out answers. This program will make you think critically about the information you receive and provide you with the skills and abilities to become an informed member of society.”
Clinton J. Underhile
Probation Officer, Will County  B.S., 1993

Clinton received his B.S. in Sociology in 1993. He currently works for Will County Probation as a Probation Officer. Some of the things he enjoyed most about his time pursuing his degree were “Learning about the criminal justice system, studying trends in society that influence and define criminal behavior and understanding the theories of societal behavior and learning to vet those theories through proper study and statistical analysis.”

He tells current students, “Spend as much time as possible around your career of choice to learn more and make an educated decision about your future occupation.”

Carrie (Ippel) Zack
Associate Director for Educator Licensure and Preparation, NIU  M.A., 2003

Carrie earned her M.A. in Sociology in 2003 and is now the Associate Director for Educator Licensure and Preparation at NIU. She says, “Working in the SOCQRL with Charles Cappell and taking the quantitative methods courses with Fred Markowitz were huge boosts to my viability on the job market. At the entry level for jobs, few others had these types of experiences and skills. SPSS for data analysis helped me land my first job...at the College of Lake County, which in turn helped me land my current job at NIU.”

She says that if a current student asked her for advice, “I would say that you should gain all the skills you can and keep your options open.”
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We are continually expanding our internship opportunities and we would like your help! Our goal is to provide students with a variety of opportunities to connect with the community and to broaden their real-world experiences.

While we already partner with many organizations at the local, state and federal level, we would like you to consider how our majors might get involved in YOUR workplace, volunteer program or community service organization.

Students not only earn graduation credit for their internship, but you will be providing them with valuable knowledge, engagement and experience that is crucial to their success upon graduation.

Contact the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Director of Student Professional Development Jack King at jackking@niu.edu to suggest a new partnership or for more information!

If you are interested in keeping in touch or learning more about what’s going on with NIU Sociology, like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/NIU-Sociology)! We post information about events and make announcements here. It’s an easy way to keep in the social network even if your address or other details of your life change. Like our alumni, our current students and faculty are doing great things and we’d like to explore connections and build NIU Sociology’s social network.