

The 2002 Social Services Job Survey

Final Report to University of Alaska President Mark Hamilton

December 2003

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The Social Services Jobs Survey was funded in December, 2001, with an award from the President's Special Fund. This document is the final report for the project.

The purpose of the study was to identify and characterize the social services jobs market in Southcentral Alaska in order to strengthen University of Alaska Anchorage educational programs and to help University students make informed career decisions. The design of the study was based on three separate data collection efforts, including surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews.

A survey of social service agencies was conducted by identifying organizations which employed social service workers throughout the UAA service area and asking each about the personnel employed. Agencies reported the types of jobs, entry-level salaries, educational requirements, and turnover rates. A second survey was sent to all 2000-2002 graduates of social service degree programs at UAA to determine what jobs graduates actually found and what salaries they were paid. A third part of the study conducted focus groups of social service agency administrators to identify the characteristics of successful employees and to interview exemplary employees nominated by their administrators.

One of the major purposes of this study was to obtain data which would result in program improvements. After the survey data have been described, the final section of this report addresses the implications of the data and recommendations for social service training efforts at UAA.

The Agency Survey

The agency survey began by constructing taxonomy of social services jobs based on job information obtained from state and government publications and interviews with local agencies. For the purposes of this study, we defined a social service job as one for which a social science degree coupled with supervised internship experiences could provide adequate entry-level preparation. Job titles and descriptions from various sources were evaluated by this general criterion and 26 different social service specialty areas presented in Table 1 were identified. The table shows a wide variety of social service jobs which range from line staff to program administrators and includes a significant number of job specializations.

Table 1
Social Service Jobs Examined in the Agency Survey

Job Title	Job Description
Paraprofessional Counselor	Provides a limited range of individual or group guidance services for problems of a vocational, educational, or personal-social nature.
MH Clinical Associate	Provides a limited range of psychological services to individuals with psychological or emotional problems such as stress, substance abuse, or family situations.
Counselor / Clinician / Therapist	Although not licensed, this individual provides a broad range of psychological services to individuals with psychological or emotional problems such as stress, substance abuse, family situations, or other problems in living. Through the use of evaluative techniques, the individual develops and implements therapeutic treatment plans.
Licensed Clinician	A licensed mental health worker who diagnoses or evaluates mental and emotional disorders of individuals and conducts programs of treatment.
Clinical Psychologist	A licensed mental health professional at the doctoral level who performs diagnostic, assessment, or mental health services; supervises the work of other mental health workers.
Director of Clinical Services / Clinical Supervisor	Directs personnel providing clinical services for psychological or emotional problems.
CD Counselor I	Provides a broad range of individual or group guidance services for problems of a substance abuse as an entry level counselor. May be certified as a Level I CD Counselor by the Alaska Commission for Chemical Dependency Professional Certification.
CD Counselor II	Provides a broad range of individual or group guidance services for problems of a substance abuse as an experienced counselor. May be certified as a Level II CD Counselor by the Alaska Commission for Chemical Dependency Professional Certification.
Social Group Worker	Develops program content, organizes, and leads activities to enhance social development/social skills of members utilizing group process techniques.
Recreational / Activity Therapist (Recreation Leader, Camp Counselor, On call)	Plans, organizes, and directs recreational programs for hospitals, community organizations and other institutions; directs and organizes activities such as sports, dramatics, games, arts and crafts, and outings to develop "client" interpersonal and leisure skills.
Social Worker	Facilitates problem solving, assists client systems obtain tangible resources, provides education, influences social

Job Title	Job Description
	policy development, engages in research and practice evaluation to promote adaptive functioning in the transactions between individuals and their environment.
CD Clinical Supervisor	Directs personnel providing services for individuals with chemical dependence problems.
Case Manager/ Care Coordinator	Develops, monitors, coordinates or implements a social service plan to meet the needs of individuals and families in social agency settings or community settings such as homes, schools, employment or recreational activities.
Respite Worker	Assists in providing services to clients and family members at a paraprofessional level.
Individual Support Worker (Residential counselor, Personal Care Assistant, Social Services Aide, Night Monitor)	Performs community contact work on simpler aspect of programs or cases and assists in providing services to clients and family members at a paraprofessional level.
Advocate (Family Advocate / Family Support Worker)	Assists families or individuals to access resources or solve problems.
Vocational Specialist (Job Coach, Employment Specialist, Work Adjuster)	Arranges productive employment in actual work environments for clients. Determines work activities for the greatest value for clients, coordinates activities with other members of the clients rehabilitation team, evaluates client progress, and processes payroll records.
Team Leader / Coordinator	Provides services to clients and supervises or coordinator the work of a small team of paraprofessional support workers.
Program Supervisor / Coordinator / Manager	Supervises and coordinates a group of activities of social service agency staff, volunteers, and student interns.
Education /Training Specialist / Staff Development	Provides or arranges education for agency staff or the community, including parent training.
Eligibility Worker (Intake Worker)	Interviews applicants to determine eligibility for counseling, therapy, or agency assistance.
Community Organization Worker	Plans, organizes, and coordinates programs with agencies, groups, and individuals in response to alleviating social problems in the community.
Program Evaluator / Special Project Coordinator	Collects and analyzes information on such matters as agency effectiveness, program compliance, and client follow up.
Administrator / Director	Directs agency or major function of public or private social service agency.
Substance Abuse Prevention Professional	Implements substance abuse prevention services by delivering services, conducting media activities, engaging in research or evaluation, and delivering training and education to selected or general populations.
Infant Learning Associate	Provides basic direct care in infant learning under the supervision and direction of an Infant Learning Therapist.

A variety of sources were consulted to identify agencies located in the service area of UAA who were likely to employ people in one or more of the 26 job categories. The initial list of 251 agencies was reduced to 184 after eliminating a number of small operations, primarily independently owned and operated assisted living homes. Data were ultimately obtained from 70 of the 184 agencies. A listing of the 251 agencies showing those that were surveyed appears as Attachment A.

While the study was being designed, we learned that a similar survey was being planned under a contract between C&S Management Services and the Alaska Alliance for Direct Service Careers, which is affiliated with the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education. We worked with C & S Management Services to develop a common survey instrument and shared data so that agencies were not contacted twice for the same data. The C & S Management Services effort was statewide and focused on agencies that served Mental Health Trust beneficiaries, so there wasn't a significant amount of overlap. Data from 10 of the 70 agencies reported in this study were obtained from C & S.

Agencies were sent a survey form (Attachment B) designed to take a minimum of agency effort to complete. The survey asked agencies to provide a summary of the services they provided and the clients they served. They were also requested to identify each social service job and to classify it according to the job taxonomy of Table 1. Information about salaries, educational requirements, and openings was obtained. Follow up phone calls were made to agencies who did not respond initially.

The Agency Survey Results

The Agency Survey data provided a comprehensive picture of the social services job market within Alaska. This report describes the clients who use these agencies. Next, the numbers of each job type are reported along with their salaries and turnover rates. Finally, data are reported to show educational requirements for each job category.

Clients of Social Service Agencies. Agencies reported that they served a variety of special populations as shown in Table 2 below. Of 91 agencies responding, over half of the agencies provided services to families, mentally ill or emotionally disturbed persons, and people with disabilities. The "Other" category included populations identified by agencies as listed in Table 2.

Table 2
Number of Agencies Serving Specific Populations

Population Served	*Percent Agencies Reporting Services
Seniors	49%
Mental Health Clients	46%
Substance Abuse Clients	39%
Children / Families	33%
Developmental Disabilities	32%
Criminal Justice	20%
Infants	10%
Other	27%
Chronically mentally ill, veterans, dual diagnosis (2), special education student, dementia, release from corrections, adult women, all disabled, domestic violence (3), sexual assault victims (3), adults in school, at risk families, general population, Job training	
*This column will total more than 100% because agencies may serve multiple populations.	

The large number of senior services is partially due to assisted living agencies in the sample. The data suggest that students preparing to work in social service agencies should have a background in human development, including family processes, mental health, substance abuse, criminal justice, and developmental disabilities.

Job Numbers, Salaries, and Turnover Rates in Social Service Agencies. In Table 3, summary data are given for 1885 jobs in 26 social service job categories. The columns report the number of agencies out of 70 who reported each position and the total number of positions reported. The salary range is shown for entry level hires and for a five-year employee.

Table 3
Job Numbers, Salaries, and Turnover Rates

Job Classification	Agencies Reporting Jobs	Positions Reported	Average Starting Salary	Average 5 Year Salary	Openings per Year
Paraprofessional Counselor	10	191	\$24,996	\$29,694	68
MH Clinical Associate	8	14	\$34,888	\$41,694	4
Counselor / Clinician / Therapist	23	87	\$39,812	\$48,273	35
Licensed Clinician	11	28	\$40,988	\$49,281	8
Clinical Psychologist	8	10	\$111,176	\$116,112	3
Director of Clinical Services	11	13	\$52,264	\$59,588	5
Chemical Dependency Counselor I	11	34	\$31,035	\$36,885	31

Job Classification	Agencies Reporting Jobs	Positions Reported	Average Starting Salary	Average 5 Year Salary	Openings per Year
Chemical Dependency Counselor II	9	68	\$32,751	\$38,451	39
Chemical Dependency Supervisor	6	11	\$44,404	\$51,696	2
Social Worker	11	44	\$39,603	\$45,980	13
Case Manager / Care Coordinator	19	144	\$32,070	\$37,675	44
Social Group Worker Specialist	2	5	\$41,392	\$34,403	2
Recreational / Activity Therapist	15	233	\$26,075	\$32,779	29
Respite Worker	4	91	\$22,100	\$23,012	47
Family Advocate	12	38	\$27,774	31,697	15
Individual Support Worker	20	643	\$21,411	\$25,405	371
Vocational Specialist	7	11	\$32,964	\$38,780	3
Team Leader / Coordinator	5	21	\$29,137	\$36,187	5
Program Supervisor	29	72	\$36,329	\$43,983	14
Education / Training Specialist	9	10	\$35,958	\$41,725	5
Eligibility / Intake Worker	8	26	\$28,131	\$28,740	12
Community Organization Worker	5	6	\$34,070	\$40,387	4
Program Evaluator	4	6	\$37,267	\$41,642	1
Administrator /Director	36	56	\$49,447	\$60,385	15
Substance Abuse Professional	6	20	\$33,786	\$36,787	9
Infant Learning Associate	2	3	\$31,304	\$35,225	10

The reported openings per year in Table 3 allow turnover rates to be determined. Over the entire table, the turnover rate is 42% per year. The highest observed rate was for Chemical Dependency Counselor I (91%) and the lowest rate was for an Activity Therapist (12%). Overall, the picture that emerges is one of a very active job market. Our own observations are consistent with this interpretation. UAA graduates frequently move around in jobs immediately after graduation as they get more experience and make community contacts that open doors to better positions. The demanding nature of some positions coupled with low wages also contributes to the reported turnover.

Educational Requirements of Social Service Jobs. Agencies were asked to specify the minimum and desired educational level for each job reported. Table 4 presents the minimum education for each job and Table 5 gives the desired education as identified by the agencies.

Table 4
Minimum Educational Requirements for Social Service Jobs

The table shows the stated minimum education requirements for each job category. Each table entry represents the number of jobs reported which required a specific level of education.

Job Classification	High School	AA/ AAS	BA/BS/ BSW	MA/MS/ MSW	PhD
Paraprofessional Counselor	61	86	41	0	0
MH Clinical Associate	2	2	6	2	0
Counselor / Clinician / Therapist	0	0	21	47	0
Licensed Clinician	0	0	1	23	1
Clinical Psychologist	0	0	1	3	2
Director of Clinical Services	0	0	2	9	2
Chemical Dependency Counselor I	16	13	4	0	0
Chemical Dependency Counselor II	7	2	58	0	0
Chemical Dependency Supervisor	0	1	3	7	0
Social Worker	6	0	12	5	0
Case Manager / Care Coordinator	30	0	85	1	0
Social Group Worker Specialist	0	0	5	0	0
Recreational / Activity Therapist	89	4	137	0	0
Respite Worker	91	0	0	0	0
Family Advocate	9	0	22	1	0
Individual Support Worker	581	19	0	0	0
Vocational Specialist	4	0	3	0	0
Team Leader / Coordinator	4	0	17	0	0
Program Supervisor	9	10	32	1	0
Education / Training Specialist	0	1	8	0	0
Eligibility / Intake Worker	17	0	7	0	0
Community Organization Worker	3	1	1	0	0
Program Evaluator	0	0	5	0	0
Administrator /Director	0	1	40	10	0
Substance Abuse Professional	2	0	16	0	0
Infant Learning Associate	2	0	1	0	0

Table 5
Desired Educational Requirements for Social Service Jobs

Job Classification	High School	AA/ AAS	BA/BS/ BSW	MA/MS/ MSW	PhD
Paraprofessional Counselor	6	14	168	0	0
MH Clinical Associate	0	0	10	0	2
Counselor / Clinician / Therapist	0	0	5	56	0
Licensed Clinician	0	0	0	16	1
Clinical Psychologist	0	0	0	4	2
Director of Clinical Services	0	0	3	4	5
Chemical Dependency Counselor I	0	6	23	0	0
Chemical Dependency Counselor II	0	2	41	24	0
Chemical Dependency Supervisor	0	0	2	9	0
Social Worker	5	0	11	7	0
Case Manager / Care Coordinator	0	2	94	15	0
Social Group Worker Specialist	0	0	1	4	0
Recreational / Activity Therapist	28	60	137	5	0
Respite Worker	88	0	0	0	0
Family Advocate	0	13	14	10	0
Individual Support Worker	91	460	6	0	0
Vocational Specialist	0	0	7	1	0
Team Leader / Coordinator	1	0	6	11	0
Program Supervisor	0	2	39	16	0
Education / Training Specialist	0	0	4	4	0
Eligibility / Intake Worker	16	1	4	0	0
Community Organization Worker	0	1	3	1	0
Program Evaluator	0	0	3	2	0
Administrator /Director	0	1	23	26	0
Substance Abuse Professional	1	2	5	11	0
Infant Learning Associate	2	0	0	1	0

Minimum education reflects the realities of the job market and provides agencies with flexibility in the case of experienced workers who lack educational credentials. It is clear, however, from Table 5 that agencies clearly prefer to hire more educated employees.

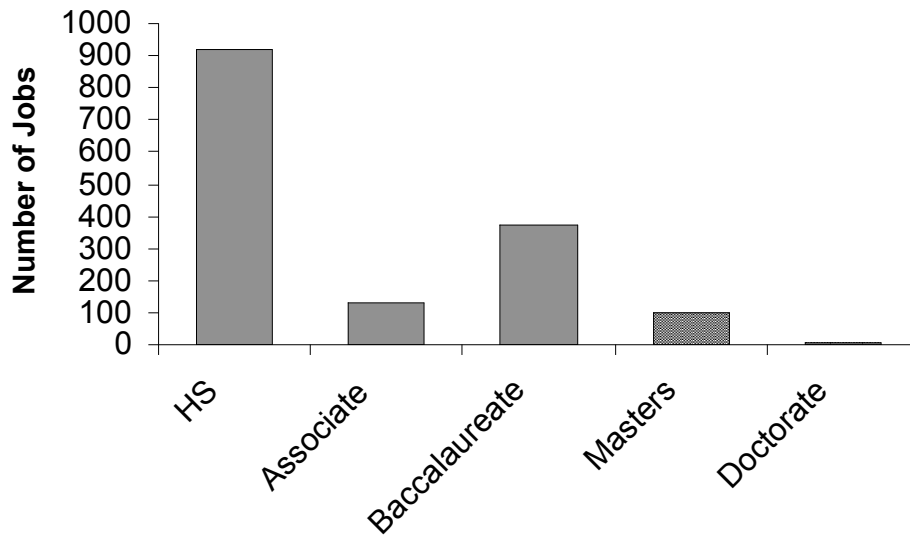
In Figure 1, the numbers of jobs at each educational level are presented graphically. The bottom panel showing desired education gives the most useful data for advising and training purposes. Substantial numbers of jobs at the associates, baccalaureate and masters levels are indicated.

Figure 1

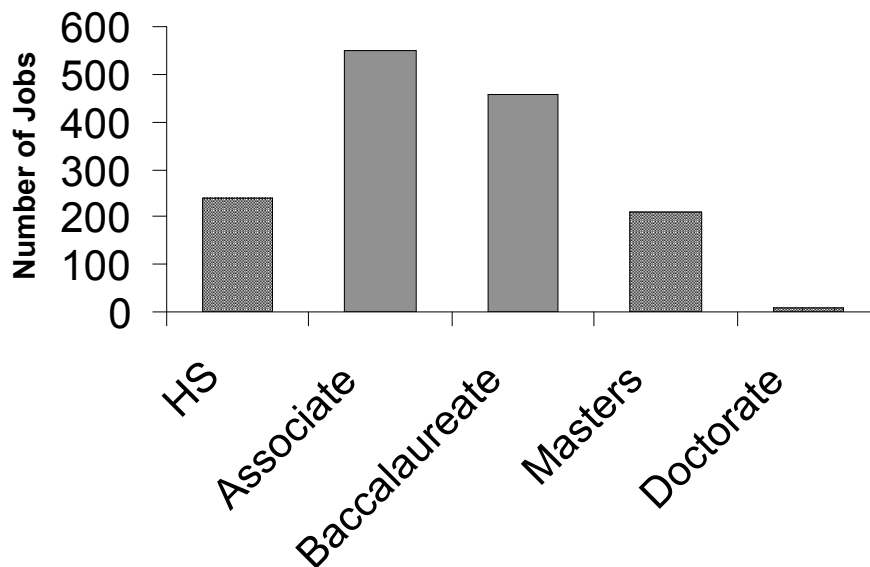
Education and Number of Jobs

Minimum education is the entry-level requirement for a job applicant. Desired education is the agencies hiring preference. The figures show totals summed over all job titles.

Number of Jobs vs Minimum Education



Number of Jobs vs Desired Education



In Table 6, the different jobs are clustered into five categories based on the main requirements of the job. Within each cluster, the jobs are ranked by a measure of their desired educational background.

Table 6
Job Clusters and Desired Education
(1 = HS, 2 = Associate, 3 = Baccalaureate, 4 = Masters, 5 = Doctorate)

Job Cluster	Average Desired Education	Number of Jobs
Generic Entry Level (669 jobs)		
Respite Worker	1.00	88
Eligibility / Intake Worker	1.43	23
Individual Support Worker	1.85	557
Infant Learning Associate	2.00	3
Mental Health (530 jobs)		
Recreational / Activity Therapist	2.52	230
Paraprofessional Counselor	2.86	188
Vocational Specialist	3.13	8
MH Clinical Associate	3.33	12
Education / Training Specialist	3.50	8
Counselor / Clinician / Therapist	3.92	61
Licensed Clinician	4.06	17
Clinical Psychologist	4.33	6
Community-Based Services (181 jobs)		
Social Worker	2.87	23
Family Advocate	2.92	37
Community Organization Worker	3.00	5
Case Manager / Care Coordinator	3.12	111
Social Group Worker / Specialist	3.80	5
Substance Abuse (115 jobs)		
Chemical Dependency Counselor I	2.79	29
Chemical Dependency Counselor II	3.33	67
Substance Abuse Professional	3.37	19
Administration (153 jobs)		
Program Supervisor	3.25	57
Program Evaluator	3.40	5
Team Leader / Coordinator	3.50	18
Administrator / Director	3.50	50
Chemical Dependency Supervisor	3.82	11
Director of Clinical Services	4.17	12

The average desired education statistic in Table 6 was calculated from Table 5 by giving high school education a value of 1, an associate education a value of 2, and baccalaureate, masters and doctorate levels of education values of 3, 4, and 5 respectively. Average value was calculated for each job.

The table shows what appear to be significant career ladders in the two important job clusters of mental health and community-based services. Jobs are available beginning with an Associate degree and continue through masters training. The table also shows a plentiful number of entry level jobs and a surprising number of administrative positions.

Comparisons the 1995 Job Study

A similar survey was conducted in 1995 in which 135 agencies were surveyed statewide. A total of 91 returns were received identifying 2493 jobs. Differences between the two studies are worthy of note. First, the 1995 study was statewide, where the current study involves only Southcentral Alaska. Second, the 2002 study used a somewhat different taxonomy of jobs to better reflect the current job market. However, some valid comparisons are possible in cases where the job descriptions have remained the same in the two studies. We identified nine jobs where the same terms were used to describe them. Taken together, these jobs accounted for 794 positions in 1995 and 749 in 2002. The jobs included paraprofessional counselor, MH clinical associate, licensed clinician, director of clinical services, social worker, case manager, recreational therapist, eligibility worker, and administrator/director.

Comparing pay for these positions, we found that average pay was up 5% between the two studies for the nine jobs, although the pay for specific jobs varied significantly. Pay was up most for case managers and clinical associates. Pay was actually down for licensed clinicians, social workers, recreational therapists, and eligibility workers. Turnover rates were generally unchanged for these nine jobs: 34% in 1995 and 31% in 2002. The relative numbers of specific jobs also showed some changes. There was an increase in paraprofessional counselors and recreational therapists and a decrease in case managers and eligibility workers.

Conclusions from the Agency Survey

The agency survey shows a diverse and robust job market for social service positions. Large numbers of workers are employed in a variety of settings calling for educational backgrounds from basic high school preparation to doctoral level training. Job turnover rates are generally high creating a fluid employment situation where individuals move within a dynamic job market. The significant discrepancy between the minimum and desired education for various positions indicates a relatively tight job market for employers. Despite this, however, the rate of growth of pay over the past seven years appears modest at best.

The Alumni Survey

The student survey was directed at 2000-2002 graduates of social service degree programs at University of Alaska campuses. A social service degree program was defined as one with a social science orientation which offered a regularly scheduled practicum, internship, or field

experience course. Programs training students for careers which require special licenses, such as nursing and education, were excluded. An examination of the University of Alaska catalogs identified nine qualifying programs: Clinical Psychology (MS), Counseling and Guidance (MED), Human Services (AAS and BHS degrees), Justice (BA), Psychology (BA/BS), Social Work (BSW and MSW), and Sociology (BA). The BA and BS in psychology were treated as one degree program.

Names and addresses of students who graduated from these programs 2000-2002 were supplied to the project by the university's alumni office. A cover letter and short survey (Attachment C) were sent to 388 students. A total of 67 envelopes were returned due to bad addresses. Of the remaining 321 alumni, 106 eventually returned the survey for an overall response rate of 33%.

Table 7 compares responses of the graduates from these programs in a number of key areas.

Table 7
2002 Alumni Study Demographics

Program	Sample Size	Total Responses	Responses with Salary Given	Percent Employed	Median Salary	Time to First Job (mos)
Human Services (AAS)	61	11	8	100	28,500	2.9
Human Services (BHS)	38	9	5	89	47,000	1.6
Justice (BA)	49	10	8	100	36,000	5.1
Psychology (BA/BS)	115	29	25	83	35,000	3.5
Social Work (BSW)	67	19	17	100	36,000	1.8
Sociology (BA)	17	6	4	83	29,000	4.5
Clinical Psychology (MS)	5	3	1	67	41,000	0
Counseling & Guidance (MED)	18	6	5	100	42,000	1.6
Social Work (MSW)	21	7	7	100	46,000	2.0

Note that not all respondents gave salary information. Overall, the table shows that workers with an Associate degree are making around \$30,000, those with baccalaureate degrees around \$35,000, and those with Masters degrees around \$45,000. Graduates found work relatively soon after graduation. Further inspection of the differences among the employment rates of different majors suggested that they were in part due to the number of individuals who were continuing their education. This number was the highest in psychology.

The next table shows the specific occupations reported by program graduates. The range is truly broad, but in general graduates of all programs gravitate to social service occupations. At the bachelor's level, it was hard to discern a marked difference in the occupations reported by the

graduates. Graduates in Human Services and Social Work appear to be most uniformly employed in social service settings. Psychology, justice and sociology graduates show more variability, but nonetheless clear preferences for social service work. At the graduate level there is more differentiation. Graduates in Clinical Psychology and the MED in Counseling and Guidance were without exception working as clinicians. The MSW graduates were more varied with almost half employed in administrative positions.

Table 8 (add recent data)
2002 Alumni Survey: Job Titles of Graduates

AAS in Human Services

Academic Advisor
Case Manager
College Intern I
Vista Volunteer
Program Counselor
Program Specialist
Student Advisor
Respite/Foster Care
Special Ed Teaching Assistant
Employment Security Specialist

BA in Justice

US Air Force Reserve
Junior Account Executive
Project Coordinator
Child Support Specialist
Paralegal
Attorney
Youth Counselor
Insurance Agent
Probation Officer
Care Coordinator

BSW in Social Work

Director
Social Services Manager
U. S. Air Force Social Worker
Social Services Associate
Social Worker II
Substitute Teacher
Chemical Dependency Coordinator
Supervised Visitation Case Manager
Statewide Outreach Coordinator

BHS in Human Services

Program Coordinator/Social Worker
Director
Intake Coordinator
Clinical Associate
Natural Resources Specialist
Registered Nurse/Counselor
Care Coordinator
Children's Services Specialist II

BA/BS in Psychology

Administrative Associate
Database Administrator
Flight Manager
Program Assistant
Children's Support Specialist
Case Manager
Human Resources Coordinator
School Counselor
On Call Residential Counselor
Chemical Dependency Counselor II
Probation Officer
Care Coordinator
City Council Employee
Substitute Teacher
Youth Ministry Intern
Executive Director
Career Development Case Manager
Care Coordinator
Real Estate Agent
Special Ed Teaching Assistant
Program Director
Educational Advisor
Senior Patrol Officer

Table 8 (continued)

2002 Alumni Survey: Job Titles of Graduates

BSW in Social Work (cont.)

Youth Counselor II
Service Coordinator
Care Coordinator
Activity Therapist
Clinical Drug & Alcohol Counselor
School-based Mentoring Caseworker
Pre-release Coordinator
Social Worker

MS in Clinical Psychology

Clinician
Clinical Therapist

MED in Counseling and Guidance

Counselor
Guidance Counselor
Guidance Counselor
Counselor

BA in Sociology

Clinical Associate
School-based specialist
English Teacher abroad
Executive Assistant
Clerical Teaching Assistant
Clinical Associate

MSW in Social Work

Social Worker
Clinical Group Therapist
Assistant Clinical Director
Assistant Clinical Manager
Training Manager
Medical Social Worker
Mental Health Clinician

Conclusions from the Alumni Survey

Generally, graduates of these programs were successful finding employment in a variety of social service settings. Many of the graduates who did not report full time employment indicated that they were enrolled in graduate programs. In psychology, for example, 21 out of 29 graduates were employed and 9 were enrolled in masters, doctoral and other programs. The occupations selected reflect the training students experienced, although the correspondence is strongest at the graduate level. Undergraduate programs where professional preparation is optional, like psychology, justice and sociology, produce graduates with more varied career pursuits. This finding is compatible with the educational philosophy of these programs. Reported salaries did not differ dramatically across the different majors and were more associated with educational level than degree specialty.

Focus Groups

Two focus groups were conducted with employers of social service workers in Southcentral Alaska to identify key characteristics of successful employees at the Associate, Baccalaureate, and Masters degree levels. These groups also assessed whether practicum placements have met employer needs.

Social service agencies were contacted and invited to participate in a focus group process. Agency participants from Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough were program administrators or human resource personnel who were responsible for hiring practices and decisions. A total of 14 people participated. They represented the service fields shown in Table 9.

Table 9
Service Fields of Focus Group Participants

Service Area	Number of Participants
Mental Health	7
Domestic Violence	1
Alcohol and Substance Abuse	3
Senior Services	1
Children and Families	7
Juvenile Justice	3

(Note: Some agencies serve more than one area.)

Each group was given materials to consider before the focus group (Attachment D). The protocol for the discussion is presented in Attachment E. Directors were asked to comment on four skill competency areas and experiences with UAA practicum courses. Notes and audio tapes from the sessions were analyzed to identify the characteristics of valued social service employees.

Focus Group Findings

- **Valued employees establish positive working relationships that show adaptability, flexibility, conflict management, communication and teamwork.**

Flexibility was viewed as extremely important and strongly related to adaptability. Social services represent “an industry where everything’s changing all the time ...” and “... turnover is relatively high throughout the industry...” [It requires] “...being flexible and learning to adapt to all that change and new situations as they come up.”

Agency directors noted that employees first entering the field are ‘typically conflict avoidant.’ Learning to engage in conflict constructively during training was seen as beneficial. It was pointed out that dealing with other agencies will not always be harmonious. “Conflict is healthy.”

The directors saw communication as taking many forms, including taking direction, asking for help, accepting constructive criticism, written composition and good spelling. Public speaking was mentioned as important.

Teamwork was stressed and particularly the ability to understand one's role and team relationships. Directors believed that employees need to recognize that team membership is interdisciplinary. From their perspective, specific disciplines and their differences (e.g., psychology, social work, human service) are not important; employees must be able to work with external agencies and constituencies.

Two other related themes also emerged. Directors believed that good employees want to do the work; many good behaviors come from the heart. The valued employee also understands customer service and treats service recipients with dignity and respect.

- **Valued employees manage workload effectively through time management, computer literacy, good decision making, the ability to follow instructions, risk control awareness, and good record keeping and documentation procedures.**

The directors agreed that managing multiple priorities is another important skill; multi-tasking is more important today.

Computer skills were also emphasized in the focus groups. In addition to word processing, employees should have the ability to use spreadsheets, databases, understand computer networks, use email, and access information on line (i.e., agency policies). "I won't hire somebody who doesn't have strong computer skills ...in a clinical position."

The ability to document succinctly in a timely manner to meet agency deadlines was seen as a critical skill. "Documentation...on a day to day basis is one of our biggest problems." They pointed out that documentation is not just about finances and billing; understanding the reason behind documentation and how it relates to service delivery and treatment was seen as important. "It is not possible to have good treatment without good documentation, and ...if it isn't in writing it didn't happen." Risk control awareness was seen as related to documentation.

The directors agreed that non-profits are small businesses with a social mission. They find increasing emphasis on results and accountability.

- **Valued employees demonstrate professional behaviors including ethical awareness, emotional self-control, effectiveness under pressure, self-awareness, self-confidence, accountability, trustworthiness, initiative, and professional development.**

Agency directors identified the importance of ethical awareness and appropriate professional boundaries. They pointed out that many organizations have a code of ethics; students could obtain a copy and learn about ethical principles applied to specific work settings.

Valuable employees were reported to understand confidentiality and information sharing and to be aware of liability issues.

Another area identified by directors was a basic understanding of office politics. “There’s a real naiveté around office politics and how you can quickly get killed if people don’t trust you or don’t feel you have good boundaries.” “Every agency has an underground ... and it can be pretty destructive.”

Directors also noted that it is important that students deal with their own problems before entering the field. “A lot of people go into this field out of a genuine want to help, but they haven’t dealt with their own stuff.”

- **Valuable employees possess client-focused skills such as empathy, service orientation, communication, resource networking, cultural competency, assessment, and problem solving.**

The directors identified listening and getting to know the person as the most important skill. Learning to adjust one’s “approach for each client and recognize that not everything is going to work for each client.

Cultural competency skills were also seen as important. A related skill was recognizing that clients are the experts on themselves. “It’s understanding not only the basic culture but the individual culture of each person.”

The directors noted that power struggles and boundary issues are big factors in client relationships. They offered that it is important to understand the client’s perspective and the value of empowering the client. “As soon as you take the power away from the client you’ve lost any therapeutic options....if they don’t have the power you’re wasting everybody’s time.”

Valuable employees realize that change processes take time and may not meet one’s expectations.

Specific skills identified by directors included psycho-educational group skills, supportive counseling, skill training, learning theory, and the idea that there are multiple intelligences.

- **In a nutshell**

One agency has recently developed a set of competencies for its employees:

- Flexibility and able to meet programmatic changes
- Works well and willingly with others (cooperation)
- Arrives to work promptly and works in a timely and responsible manner
- Maintains confidentiality of information and professional boundaries
- Uses appropriate channels of communication to seek answers, makes suggestions and to openly advocate change
- Works independently, seeks out and takes on new duties
- Upholds the mission and vision of the agency

Conclusions and Implications for Training Programs

No appreciable differences in expected competencies emerged among Associate, Baccalaureate, and Masters degree level employees. Differences in degrees were reflected in the type of job and associated degree and experience qualifications. The focus group information suggested specific recommendations for training students for social service jobs.

- More opportunities for ‘hands on’ experience throughout the curriculum.
- Courses and training in conflict resolution.
- Training on formal and informal organizations, including roles, teamwork, boundaries, management styles, budgeting, and office politics.
- Computer literacy skills (internet, email, spreadsheets, data-bases, web page development).
- Courses on professional ethics, boundaries, and decision making.
- Interdisciplinary instruction.
- Develop screening processes to help identify issues and students who may not be a good match in human services.
- Provide opportunities for students to experience what it feels like to be a service recipient.
- Applied writing and verbal presentation skills.

Practicum Experiences

Agency directors were also asked to comment on their experiences with practicum students to help UAA programs better prepare students. A relatively modest set of suggestions emerged.

- It is helpful for students to have some basic knowledge of the field in which they will be working before beginning practicum.
- What students learn is the responsibility of the student. It works better when students have learning goals.
- Practicum works well when faculty are involved and help resolve problems.
- Agencies view every practicum student as a potential employee.

Implications for Practicum Instruction

It is clearly important to prepare interns to understand and know their role and job etiquette. This must take place before the first day on the practicum site. Students should have competence in basic interviewing skills before beginning practicum. It is also good practice to invite employer panels to discuss expectations, how to apply for employment, and make suggestions for resume writing.

Exemplary Employees

As part of the study, we asked program administrators to identify exemplary employees who were graduates of UAA programs. The purpose was to identify the job behaviors employees were asked to perform and to ask about the strengths and weaknesses of their job preparation. We interviewed five employees, each in a different agency. The interview protocol is given in Attachment F. Here we report specific responses to three key questions in the protocol.

How well did your college program prepare you for working in human services? What helped the most? What would you change or add?

Employee 1. (BS)

“Learned basics of understanding different approaches to school psychology. Learned how diagnosis works. Experimental psychology and statistics were valuable to understand what kind of development children go through from a psychological perspective and to be able to look at a chart and understand statistical information.”

“Didn’t learn as much how treatment planning and treatment implementation with clients works. Would have liked more behavioral intervention classes. Different ranges of working with problem behaviors. Course work emphasizing cultural understanding. Courses providing hands on community work less than a practicum.”

Employee 2 (BS)

“My psychology degree didn’t help with obtaining my present position nor earlier counseling positions. In the counseling position, I drew from my personality and earlier life experiences.”

“If the majority of psychology graduates go on to higher degrees, the present psychology program doesn’t need to be changed. For those that don’t, additional course work providing more specific skills may be useful.”

Employee 3 (BA)

“It did a good job preparing me for working with SED kids in terms of theories. physiology of psychology was especially helpful. Here we are looking at SED kids more from a medical model than from a behavioral one. My current degree program teaches me how to actually counsel the kids and could lead me into a clinician job. The masters program is better at helping me do this. I wouldn’t change anything; it’s where you go with it. The psychology background is helpful in this field.”

Employee 4 (MSW)

“My social work degree generally accommodated me. I had a previous background in administration, so this helped in my preparation. The internship helped the most. It taught me to

learn and seek out more information. I don't believe there should be a lot of specialization. It's hard for people to say where they want to go. I would add an opportunity to interview different agencies, but I realize this would be hard to do. The goal should be to help people find where they want to go. I also think that ethics and boundaries are hard and students need help learning about them."

Employee 5 (BSW)

"A couple of profs helped me the most; they were mentors to me. I felt the program was academically strong, and I loved the practicum. I would change some of the overall university bureaucracy, especially financial aid."

Did you have a practicum in your academic program? Where? How did this experience help you in your current position?

Employee 2 (BS)

"Practicums are very valuable and I would like to host practicum students at the agency. I feel that it would enrich the programs offered and we have had positive experiences with UAA practicum students."

Employee 3 (BA)

"I had practicums in both undergraduate and graduate programs. In undergrad it was two semesters at about 75 hours each. I did it at McLaughlin Youth Center in the intake and detention units and it was a wonderful experience. It helped in this job because I made connections for shared clients. For my masters program I will do 2 more practicums of 150 hours each (300 total). I will do it in the fall in a block placement in an elementary and a middle school simultaneously. Internships are the critical pieces of these programs because they connect what you learn from the books with actually doing it. I am looking forward to my practicum to find out if the school setting is really what I want to do with my life."

Employee 4 (MSW)

"I would have liked more supervision and mentoring and role modeling. Especially in group work on the process end."

Employee 5 (BSW)

"It was a phenomenal experience. The day after I graduated, they hired me at my practicum site. I got a real macro view from my placement and met many professional in the field. It was very successful from a networking perspective."

What are your career plans for the future?

Employee 1 (BS)

"Thinking about getting an MSW from UAA. Also thinking about a degree in education and enjoy working with kids. Want to learn more about working with different cultures."

Employee 2 (BS)

“I am working on an MBA at UAA and am enrolled in a certification program as a professional human resource director. I would like to obtain a master’s in public administration and feel that this degree would open up opportunities for me in administration.”

Employee 3 (BA)

“I am graduating in December and plan to work full time at this agency until I can get into a middle school as a school counselor. I’m happy enough here that I’ll wait until I can get the ASD job I really want. I don’t want to work in elementary or high school, just in middle school. I will also get my LPC so I have flexibility and could practice as a clinician.”

Employee 4 (MSW)

“Become a licensed clinical social worker.”

Employee 5 (BSW)

“Seek an MSW with an emphasis on child protection and children’s services. In the longer run I would like to become a licensed clinical social worker and have my own agency.”

Conclusions from Exemplary Employee Interviews

The complete protocols revealed that the employees nominated engaged in a variety of tasks requiring high levels of skill and knowledge with much discretion being available to them suggesting that they were functioning at a professional level.

The psychology majors found their undergraduate education was viewed as being helpful from a generic perspective but it was necessary for additional training from the work site that was more specific to their present position. The need for additional formal education was recognized as a way of advancing in their chosen field of practice. The BSW major felt more prepared, probably reflecting the more tightly structured professional training of that program. The MSW graduate was also well prepared for her position.

The interviews suggest that the undergraduate psychology program might evaluate a more structured presentation of core job skills to provide students with a more secure foundation for social service jobs. However, all of the graduates expressed satisfaction with their programs and were functioning at an exemplary level according to their supervisors.

Summary

This project collected and analyzed extensive data on the social service job market in Southcentral Alaska. The primary objective of the study was to assemble detailed job market information to allow University of Alaska Anchorage social service related degree programs to better prepare students for Alaskan jobs and to help University of Alaska students in career decisions. The project was funded by a President's Special Fund award in December 2001. Three separate data collection efforts were undertaken.

The Agency Survey contacted 184 social service agencies throughout the service area of UAA and requested information about the numbers of social service jobs in the agency, the entry-level salary ranges for these positions, the minimum educational requirements, and the number of position openings each year. A total of 70 agencies responded, identifying about 1800 social service jobs in 26 different job categories. The desired education for 38% of the jobs was Associate's degree or less; 37% of the jobs sought a Bachelor's degree; and 14% desired a Master's degree. Relatively few agency jobs were found requiring PhD degrees. Salaries varied widely, but the average salary for jobs with a desired educational requirement of an Associate's degree was \$27,876, jobs seeking Bachelor-level education paid an average of \$31,654, and jobs wanting a Master's degree paid an average of \$42,176. Agencies reported that about one-third of these jobs turn over each year.

The UAA Graduate Survey followed up 2000-2002 graduates of University of Alaska Anchorage social service related degree programs to determine their employment status. A total of 388 students graduating from nine social service degree programs at UAA were surveyed with a 33% response rate. Overall, 92% of these graduates were employed, typically in social service career fields. Alumni reported salaries in the \$30,000 to \$45,000 corresponding to degrees from Associates to Master level.

Agency Director Focus Groups asked experienced directors of social service agencies to identify key characteristics of successful employees. Directors reported that valued employees established positive working relationships, manage their workloads, demonstrate professional behavior, and possess client-focused skills.

Program Implications and Recommendations were developed to strengthen UAA's programs in this important sector of employment in Alaska.

Attachment A: 251 Social Service Agencies in Southcentral Alaska

Selected agencies (184) were asked to participate in the survey. Of these, 70 responded.

<u>Organization Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Selected</u>	<u>Responded</u>
Abused Women's Aid in Crisis	Anchorage	Yes	
Access Alaska	Anchorage	Yes	
Adela Assisted Living Home	Anchorage		
AK State Dept. of Corrections	Anchorage		
AK State School/Deaf & Hard of Hearing	Anchorage		
Akeela, Inc.	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Alaska Center for Blind Adults	Anchorage		
Alaska Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing	Anchorage		
Alaska Children's Services	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Alaska Community Service, Inc.	Anchorage		
Alaska Early Intervention Hearing Resource	Anchorage	Yes	
Alaska Housing Finance Corporation	Anchorage	Yes	
Alaska Legal Services Corp	Anchorage		
Alaska Mental Health Association	Anchorage		
Alaska Native Medical Center	Anchorage		
Alaska No. 1 ALH	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Alaska Psychiatric Institute	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Alaska Regional Hospital	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Alaska Specialized Education & Training	Anchorage		
Alaska Women's Resource Center	Anchorage		
Alaska Work Program	Anchorage	Yes	
Alaska Youth & Parent Foundation	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Alaskan Aids Assistance Program	Anchorage	Yes	
Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska	Anchorage	Yes	
Amazing Grace Family Living	Anchorage	Yes	
American Red Cross Southcentral	Anchorage	Yes	
Anchorage Partnership for a Healthy Comm.	Anchorage	Yes	
Anchorage Pioneers' Home	Anchorage	Yes	
Anchorage Senior Center	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Angel Eyes Assisted Living Home	Anchorage	Yes	
Assets, Inc.	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Aurora Assisted Living Home	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Aurora House	Anchorage	Yes	
Baptist Family Service Center - Alaska	Anchorage	Yes	
Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Alaska	Anchorage	Yes	
Boys & Girls Club of Anchorage	Anchorage	Yes	

Organization Name	Location	Selected	Responded
Burch's Assisted Living Home I	Anchorage		
Bureau of Indian Affairs	Anchorage	Yes	
CampFire - Chugach Council	Anchorage		
Catholic Social Services	Anchorage	Yes	
Narcotic Drug Treatment Center	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Center for Psychosocial Development	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Challenge Alaska	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Chevigny House Elder Care	Anchorage	Yes	
Christian Cottage Assisted Living	Anchorage	Yes	
Chugachmiut, Inc.	Anchorage	Yes	
Client Assistance Program (CAP)	Anchorage	Yes	
Clitheroe Center	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Cook Inlet Tribal Council	Anchorage	Yes	
Cordova Center - Allvest, Inc.	Anchorage		
Covenant House Alaska	Anchorage	Yes	
Crossroads Assisted Living	Anchorage	Yes	
Denali Family Services	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Department of Veterans' Affairs	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Dignified Home Life Care III	Anchorage	Yes	
Disability Law Center	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Division of Alcohol & Drug Abuse	Anchorage		
Division of Senior Services	Anchorage	Yes	
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Anchorage	Yes	
DMHDD	Anchorage		
Eastern Aleutian Tribes	Anchorage		
Easy Living AFC	Anchorage	Yes	
Elena's Place I, II	Anchorage	Yes	
Elita's Golden Home Care	Anchorage	Yes	
Equal Rights Commission	Anchorage		
Ernie Turner Center	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Family Outreach Center	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Galactica ALH I, II	Anchorage	Yes	
Gathering of the Elders ALH	Anchorage	Yes	
Genesis Recovery Services	Anchorage		
Genevieve Assisted Living Home, II	Anchorage	Yes	
Golden Heart ALH	Anchorage	Yes	
Governor's Council on DD & Spec.Ed.	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Graceful Living ALH	Anchorage		
Health & Human Services	Anchorage	Yes	
Hidden Heights ALH	Anchorage	Yes	
Holy Family Adult Foster Care, II, III	Anchorage	Yes	
Home Sweet Home Assisted Living	Anchorage	Yes	
Hope Community Resources	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Human Rights Commission	Anchorage		

Organization Name	Location	Selected	Responded
Immaculate Concepcion Home, II	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Irene Nolan Assisted Living Home	Anchorage	Yes	
Jacob's Ladder	Anchorage	Yes	
Job Ready	Anchorage	Yes	
Lakeview Home, II	Anchorage	Yes	
Lutheran Social Services	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Magellan Behavioral Health	Anchorage	Yes	
Maria Angelica ALH	Anchorage	Yes	
Marlow Manor/Manor Management of A	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
McLaughlin Youth Center	Anchorage	Yes	
MOA - DHHS	Anchorage		
NAMI Alaska	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Nine Star Enterprises, Inc.	Anchorage		
Ninilchik Senior Citizens, Inc.	Anchorage		
North Star Hospital	Anchorage		
Nugens Ranch	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman	Anchorage	Yes	
Older Persons Action Group, Inc.	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Our Lady of Lourdes	Anchorage	Yes	
Palmer Pioneers' Home	Anchorage	Yes	
Pals Palace	Anchorage	Yes	
PARENTS, Inc	Anchorage	Yes	
Parkside Assisted Living, Inc.	Anchorage	Yes	
Patchwork House	Anchorage	Yes	
Planned Parenthood of Alaska	Anchorage		
Programs for Infants & Children	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Providence Breakthrough	Anchorage	Yes	
Providence Horizon House	Anchorage	Yes	
Providence Hospital	Anchorage	Yes	
R.I.T.E., Inc.	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
RADACT	Anchorage		
Ricky's Good-Rich Assisted Living	Anchorage	Yes	
Rural Alaska Community Action Program	Anchorage	Yes	
Sacred Heart Care Center	Anchorage	Yes	
Salvation Army Booth Memorial	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Serendipity-Adult Daycare Program	Anchorage		
Social Security Administration	Anchorage	Yes	
Southcentral Counseling	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Southcentral Foundation	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Southcentral Foundation Head Start	Anchorage	Yes	
Special Olympics	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
St. Anne Assisted Living Home	Anchorage	Yes	
St Augustine Assisted Living Home, II	Anchorage		
St. Lawrence Assisted Living Home	Anchorage	Yes	

Organization Name	Location	Selected	Responded
Standing Together Against Rape	Anchorage		
State Independent Living Council	Anchorage		
State of AK., Dept. of Education	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
State of AK - Div. of Public Assistance	Anchorage		
State of Alaska DHSS, DPH"	Anchorage	Yes	
Sterling Assisted Living Home	Anchorage	Yes	
Sunset Home Care for Alzheimers I, II, III	Anchorage		
Sweet Lorraine's on Copperwood Drive	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Thania's Assisted Living Home	Anchorage	Yes	
The Arc of Anchorage	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Turnagain Adult Foster Home	Anchorage	Yes	
Valdez Counseling Center	Anchorage		
Veterans Resource Center	Anchorage		
Volunteers of America	Anchorage	Yes	
YWCA	Anchorage	Yes	Yes
Chugiak Children's Services	Chugiak	Yes	Yes
Copper River Native Assoc MH Center	Copper Center	Yes	Yes
Cordova Community Hospital	Cordova	Yes	
Cordova Family Resource Center	Cordova	Yes	Yes
Cordova MH & Alcohol Clinic	Cordova	Yes	
Prince William Sound/ILP	Cordova	Yes	Yes
Sound Alternatives	Cordova	Yes	
Bear Mountain Manor	Eagle River	Yes	
C & C Services	Eagle River		
Guardian Angel Assisted Living Home	Eagle River	Yes	
Hand in Hand Care	Eagle River	Yes	
Jean's Place I, II	Eagle River		
Scott Manor	Eagle River	Yes	
Circle of Wings	Homer	Yes	
Fern Ridge TLC	Homer	Yes	
Friendship Terrace	Homer		
Grandma and Grandpa's	Homer	Yes	
Homer Children's Services	Homer	Yes	
Homer Community MH Center	Homer	Yes	Yes
Homer Senior Citizens, Inc.	Homer	Yes	Yes
Johnson's Assisted Living	Homer	Yes	
L/V Ark	Homer	Yes	
Majestic View Assisted Living	Homer	Yes	
NAMI of Homer	Homer		
Rainbow Assisted Living	Homer	Yes	
South Peninsula Community MH	Homer		
South Peninsula Women's Services, Inc.	Homer	Yes	Yes
Mid-Valley Seniors, Inc.	Houston		
Central Peninsula Counseling Center	Kenai	Yes	

Organization Name	Location	Selected	Responded
CICADA	Kenai	Yes	Yes
Hospice of the Central Peninsula	Kenai		
Kenai, City Of - Senior Services	Kenai		
Kenai Peninsula Community Care Center	Kenai	Yes	Yes
Kenai/Soldotna Women's Resource	Kenai	Yes	Yes
Kenaitze Indian Tribes	Kenai	Yes	
Nicholson's Assisted Living Home	Kenai		
Veterans Resource Center	Kenai		
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Kodiak		
Kodiak Area Native Association	Kodiak	Yes	Yes
Kodiak Baptist Mission	Kodiak	Yes	
NAMI Kodiak	Kodiak		
Providence Kodiak Island MH Center	Kodiak	Yes	Yes
Safe Harbor	Kodiak	Yes	Yes
Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc.	Kodiak	Yes	
Vocational Rehabilitation - Kodiak	Kodiak		
Women's Resource & Crisis Ctr	Kodiak	Yes	
Alaska Family Resource Center	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Alaska Job Corps	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Alaskan Treasures	Palmer	Yes	
Allen House Assisted Living	Palmer	Yes	
Avalon Haven	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Country Home Assisted Living	Palmer	Yes	
Creekside Assisted Living	Palmer	Yes	
Daybreak	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Debbie's Place	Palmer	Yes	
Heidi's Place	Palmer	Yes	
Kids Are People	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Mat-Su Youth Facility	Palmer	Yes	
Northstar Asst. Living/Michael's Place	Palmer		
Our House	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Palmer Senior Citizens Center	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Pioneer Peak Assisted Living	Palmer	Yes	
Teen Challenge of Alaska	Palmer	Yes	
Thelma's Loving Care Home	Palmer	Yes	
Valley Hospital	Palmer	Yes	Yes
Seldovia Village Tribe	Seldovia	Yes	
South Kachemak Inc. Alcoholism Program	Seldovia		
Alaska Vocational Technical Center	Seward	Yes	Yes
Clearview Haven	Seward		
Job Ready	Seward		
Questa Woods Assisted Living	Seward		
SeaView Community Services	Seward	Yes	Yes
Seward Senior Citizens, Inc.	Seward	Yes	Yes

Organization Name	Location	Selected	Responded
Tanana Chiefs Conference/ILP	Seward	Yes	
Wesley Rehabilitation and Care Center	Seward	Yes	
Bridges Community Resource Network	Soldotna		
Family Recovery Center	Soldotna		
Frontier Community Services	Soldotna	Yes	
Heritage Place	Soldotna	Yes	Yes
NAMI Soldotna/Kenai	Soldotna		
Peninsula Home Health Care	Soldotna	Yes	
Planned Parenthood of Alaska - Soldotna	Soldotna		
RITE Inc., Soldotna	Soldotna		
Soldotna Area Senior Citizens, Inc.	Soldotna	Yes	Yes
Sunshine Community Health Center	Talkeetna		
Advocates for Victims of Violence	Valdez		
Connecting Ties	Valdez	Yes	
Early Intervention/ILP - Valdez	Valdez		
Frontier Community Services - Valdez	Valdez		
Valdez Counseling Center	Valdez	Yes	Yes
Valdez Infant Learning Program	Valdez		
Valdez Senior Citizens Center	Valdez	Yes	Yes
A Helping Hand Eldercare	Wasilla	Yes	
Alaska Home Care	Wasilla	Yes	
Angels Touch	Wasilla	Yes	
Anila's Home Health Care	Wasilla	Yes	
Colony Manor	Wasilla	Yes	
Healthy Families Mat-Su	Wasilla	Yes	
Hope Community Resources	Wasilla		
Infant Learning Program	Wasilla	Yes	
Job Ready	Wasilla		
Life Quest	Wasilla	Yes	Yes
LV's Home Care	Wasilla	Yes	
Mat-Su Council Recovery Center, Inc.	Wasilla	Yes	Yes
NAMI Wasilla	Wasilla		
Pat's Care-Adult Assisted Living	Wasilla	Yes	
Starting Point	Wasilla	Yes	
Susitna Family Services	Wasilla		
HeartReach Pregnancy Center	Wasilla	Yes	
Valley Health Services	Wasilla	Yes	Yes
Wasilla Area Seniors, Inc.	Wasilla	Yes	Yes

Attachment B: Agency Survey Form

University of Alaska Anchorage Social Services Job Survey

This job survey is focused on social service jobs that either provide direct client services or directly supervise such services. The survey makes use of standardized job titles that are described in the accompanying list.

1. Name of Organization/Program _____
2. Which of the following populations does your program serve? Please check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Clients | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Clients |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Population | <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental Disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infants (Infant Learning Program) | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children and Families | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

3. Which of the following age groups do you serve? Please check all that apply.
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infants (0-3) | <input type="checkbox"/> Children (Ages 4 – 12) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adolescents (Ages 13 – 17) | <input type="checkbox"/> Adults (Ages 18 through 65) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors (Ages 66 and older) | |

4. During the last two years, what percentage new direct service professional staff have you recruited:

Locally _____
Out of State _____
Alaska (but not locally) _____
☐ No staff recruited in last two years

5. What were your top three recruitment sources for new direct service professional staff ?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Job fair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Hotline | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agency web page | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk in applicants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> University | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

On the following page is a table listing the various job classifications within the social services. Descriptions of each job accompany the survey. For each of the relevant positions employed by your program, please complete the boxes in the table.

Confidentiality Note: Information provided on the survey will be used to develop statistical averages across agencies, and no information specific to an agency will be released. Agency identifiers will be removed from the data in the early stages of analysis. This project has been reviewed and approved by the UAA Institutional Review Board. It meets all applicable federal and university guidelines for research involving human participants. July 17, 2002

For each relevant position in your agency, please complete the information identified across the top of the form. A separate sheet contains short descriptions of each job classification. Skip over positions that do not exist in your agency.

Job Classification	Total Positions Budgeted	Positions Now Filled	Number Hired Last Year	Number Quit Last Year	Beginning Hourly Pay (typical)	Hourly Pay 2-4 years (typical)	Hourly Pay 5+years (typical)	Minimum Education Required	Education Desired	Substitution of Experience for Education allowed?	Have you hired below minimum quals in last 2 years?
Paraprofessional Counselor											
MH Clinical Associate											
Counselor, Clinician, Therapist											
Licensed Clinician											
Clinical Psychologist											
Director of Clinical Services/Clinical Supervisor											
CD Counselor I											
CD Counselor II											
CD Clinical Supervisor											
Social Worker											
Case Manager/Care Coordinator											
Social Group Worker											
Recreational/Activity Therapist											
Respite Worker											
Advocate (Family Advocate/Family Support Worker)											

Job Classification	Total Positions Budgeted	Positions Now Filled	Number Hired Last Year	Number Quit Last Year	Beginning Hourly Pay (typical)	Hourly Pay 2-4 years (typical)	Hourly Pay 5+years (typical)	Minimum Education Required	Education Desired	Substitution of Experience for Education allowed?	Have you hired below minimum quals in last 2 years?
Individual Support Worker (residential counselor, personal care assistant, social services aide, night monitor)											
Vocational Specialist (Job Coach, Employment Specialist Work Adjuster)											
Team Leader, Coordinator											
Program Supervisor, Coordinator, Manager											
Education, Training Specialist, Staff Development											
Eligibility Worker (Intake Worker)											
Community Organization Worker											
Program Evaluator Special Project Coordinator											
Administrator/Director											
Substance Abuse Professional											
Infant Learning Associate											

Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete this survey!

Attachment C: Alumni Survey Materials

Letter to Students

What jobs do University of Alaska Anchorage graduates in counselor education, human services, justice, psychology, sociology, and social work find? This short survey was designed to find out. It is being sent to all 2000 graduates from UAA in these programs. The results will be made available to students majoring in these areas and their advisors. The findings will also help academic programs identify important job skills.

The survey is very brief, and we hope you will complete it now and drop it in the mail. If you would be interested in the results, put your address on the front side of the post card or call us at 907 786-1729.

Thank you for your help!

Patrick Cunningham Cheryl Mann Bob Madigan Karen Ward

Student Survey

1. Are you presently: Employed _____ Looking for work _____
2. If employed: Job title _____
What are your job duties? _____
3. If applicable, what clientele do you work with (e.g. children, developmentally disabled, etc) ? _____
4. Annual salary _____ Full-time or Part-time _____
5. How long after graduation did it take to find your first job? _____
6. Did you find your first job as a result of a practicum or field experience?

7. If you are presently a student, what program are you pursuing? _____

Thank you. Your responses will give other students helpful career information.

Attachment D: Focus Group Materials

Entry Level Competencies

Please rank order each of the competencies under each category. You may add additional competencies to the rank order. 1 = most important

Position: _____

1. Establishes positive working relationships

Other

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|-----|-------|
| ___ | Adaptability | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Flexibility | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Conflict management | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Communication | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Teamwork | ___ | _____ |

2. Manages workload efficiently and effectively

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|-------|
| ___ | Time management | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Record keeping/documentation | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Computer literacy | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Decision-making | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Able to identify informational requirements | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Present information | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Follow instruction | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Risk control awareness | ___ | _____ |

3. Demonstrates professional behaviors

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|-----|-------|
| ___ | Ethical awareness | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Emotional self-control | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Effectiveness under pressure | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Demonstrates self-awareness | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Self-confidence | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Accountability | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Trustworthiness | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Initiative | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Self-development | ___ | _____ |

4. Client focused skills

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|-------|
| ___ | Empathy, understanding others | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Service orientation | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Communication | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Resource networking | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Cultural competency | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Assessment | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Problem solving | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Referral | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Case planning and coordination | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Crisis intervention of management | ___ | _____ |
| ___ | Advocacy | ___ | _____ |

Attachment E: Focus Group Protocol

Social Service Jobs in Southcentral Alaska: Identifying Job Characteristics and Training Objectives

Agency Administrators Focus Group

Good morning and thank you for coming to this small group discussion. We are _____ and this is a part of our study exploring social service jobs in Southcentral Alaska and identifying job characteristics and training objectives. Let's begin by having each of you identify yourself, your agency, and its major mission.

Our goal in the approximately two hours we have together is to listen to your thoughts regarding three areas. They are what competencies you expect newly hired staff to possess for the various positions you have? We also wish your feedback on practicum student placements that will also allow improvements to be made in student preparation and agency-student matches. And lastly, we will be asking you to nominate a member of your staff, for each distinct position that you feel is exemplary so that we may interview them to obtain more in-depth information about how they demonstrate competencies and how these competencies impact service delivery.

We would like your permission to tape record this meeting because we don't want to miss any of the comments you make. After we have prepared the report, the tape will be retained by _____ for _____ (time period) and then erased. No names will be used in the report and your comments will remain confidential. In the report the investigators will define major competency areas and identify feedback and recommendations for improvement in practicum student placements. This information will be disseminated to agencies and UAA departments who have expressed an interest in receiving the report.

During our discussion, if you want to follow up on something someone said, you want to agree or disagree or give an example, please do so. We may take a few notes during the discussion and they are mainly to remind ourselves of a point we may want to pursue at a latter time.

While we will be posing some questions, don't feel you have to respond to us all the time. Feel free to have a conversation among yourselves. Our role as facilitators are to ask questions, listen and make sure everyone has an opportunity to share thoughts about the topic. We are interested in what each of you has to say. If someone is talking a lot, we may ask you to give others a chance to speak. If you aren't saying much, we may call on you. We just want to be sure we hear from everyone.

We plan to be informal so please feel free to get up and get more refreshments if you would like anytime during the discussion. Thank you again for being here.

Protocol for focus group session.

Prior to this meeting, you were sent a listing of entry level competencies and were asked to rank order these competencies under each major section and to add your own competencies you feel are important under each section, and to add other sections that you feel were important. We also asked you to differentiate between the various positions you listed in our questionnaire, if these competencies varied depending upon the position. You sent the results to us and we have compiled it on power point slides or charts for each position and will discuss each position among those of you who share these positions.

NOTE: Select the first position that is shared among the majority of attendees for discussion.

Practicum Feedback

Prior to this meeting, we asked you to list the various practicum placements you provide to UAA students. If you provided placements for different UAA departments, you were asked to complete a separate form for each. In addition to this we asked you to complete a form that asked you to rate the quality of your working relationship with the faculty member, the effectiveness of the faculty in communicating and clarifying the policies, procedures, and expectations of students in the practicum. We also asked you to rate the effectiveness of the faculty in assisting you to address and resolve any challenges or difficulties during the practicum, and any other factor you felt important. (scale: excellent, very good, satisfactory, fair, unsatisfactory)

In regards to the typical student placed with your agency, we asked you to rate the level of student readiness for the practicum, oral communication, written communication, conceptual ability, compatibility with practicum and any other factor you felt important (scale: excellent, very good, satisfactory, fair, unsatisfactory)

In terms of process, we asked you
What went right (strengths)
What could be better (weaknesses)
What could be different (challenges)

Nomination of exemplary staff for in-depth interview

One for each distinct position.

Attachment F: Exemplary Employee Interview

University of Alaska Anchorage Social Services Job Survey Case Study Interview Protocol

Name:

Job Title: _____

Agency: _____

Years in current position: _____

Experience in the human service field: _____

Degree: _____

Major: _____

Year degree conferred: _____

Institution: _____

Age: _____

- 1. Describe your work activities in a typical day/typical week.**

- 2. What aspects of your job do you like the most?**

- 3. What aspects of your job do you like the least?**

- 4. What types of professional development activities, such as training, reading, conferences do you engage in? How often? How does your agency support you in these activities?**

- 5. How well did your college program prepare you for working in human services? What helped the most? What would you change or add?**

- 6. Did you have a practicum in your academic program? Where? How did this experience help you in your current position?**

- 7. What are your career plans for the future?**