Recipients of Social Work Research Fellowships for 2003-2004 are:

**Jacqueline Corcoran, Ph.D.**

Dr. Corcoran’s research program is titled *A Strengths and Skills Based Group Intervention for Adolescent Girls*. It will test an eight-week integrative strengths and skills group intervention in school settings for girls who have problems coping with sexual-risk taking, pregnancy, substance abuse, eating disorders, and depression. The study examines how girls who receive the intervention improve on an inventory of stress and coping compared to girls who do not receive the intervention. The intervention entails a strengths-and skills-based integrative model developed by Dr. Corcoran that combines solution-focused therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy targeted at coping and interpersonal skills.

Dr. Corcoran is Associate Professor of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University. She earned the M.S.S.W. (1989) and the Ph.D. (1996) from the University of Texas at Austin. Her research interests include therapy with behavior-disordered children, family therapy and preservation, child protective services, adolescent sexual activity, domestic abuse, and juvenile delinquency. Dr. Corcoran recently has published two books: *Evidence-based Social Work Practice with Families: A Lifespan Approach* (Springer Publishing, 2000), and *Clinical Applications of Evidence-based Family Intervention* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

**David A. Zanis, Ph.D.**

Dr. Zanis’s study is titled *Services Accountability Management Index (SAMI): A Counseling Framework Based on Continuous Assessment*. It examines data on the clinical utility of the SAMI, a framework designed to provide social work practitioners with a tested method for assessing client needs, priorities, and changes in functioning across multiple points in time. Among the questions to be studied are: (1) To what extent does use of the SAMI improve the quality of evidence-based practice in substance abuse and counseling programs? (2) How does the SAMI impact treatment engagement, therapeutic alliance, and retention? (3) Compared to standard treatment, does implementation of the SAMI yield improvements in client functioning? Social workers in two methadone treatment programs will be assigned randomly to a 12-week experimental condition and a control condition. Adult subjects who are 100% heroin dependent and who are not currently enrolled in other treatment services will be assigned randomly to the two conditions.

Dr. Zanis is Research Associate Professor at the University of Maryland Graduate School of Social Work in Baltimore. He earned the Ph.D. (1996) from the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work. His research focuses primarily on the etiology and treatment of substance abuse.
Richard A. Embry, Ph.D and Aron Shlonsky, Ph.D.

Dr. Embry and Dr. Shlonsky will conduct a research program titled Visit Coaching: Improving Social Work Practice Through a Randomized Clinical Trial. This research aims to evaluate the efficacy of an intervention model designed to increase the number and quality of parental visits, decrease parent and child ambivalence about visits, improve parental understanding of their children’s needs, and enhance parental ability to meet the needs of their children. The subjects are children who have recently entered out-of-home care because of maltreatment or neglect. The evaluative parent groups will be assigned randomly to either Visit Coaching services or regular agency services. The project is a cooperative effort among the New York City Administration for Children’s Services, three private, non-profit child welfare agencies in New York City, and the Columbia University School of Social Work.

Dr. Richard Embry is Assistant Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work. He holds an MSW (1980) from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work and a Ph.D. (2000) from the University of California at Berkeley, School of Social Welfare. His research interests and publications focus on child welfare services, children and adolescents, domestic violence, and women with physical disabilities.

Dr. Aron Shlonsky is Assistant Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work. He earned the Ph.D. (2002) from the University of California at Berkeley where he also received the MSW (1995) and the MPH (2000). His research and publications focus on child welfare, evidence-based practice, research methods for the social sciences, public health/epidemiology, and program evaluation.