NSW initiated SWAN to provide a mechanism for social workers to offer their expertise and skills to serve humanitarian needs within the international community on a voluntary basis and to develop collaborative linkages with other agencies around the world.

International Partnerships

African Palliative Care Association (APCA)

NSW hosted leaders of the African Palliative Care Association (APCA) and members of the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda in 2011 and 2012. Continuing the partnership, NSW contributes resources and materials on palliative and end of life social work to the organization.

Best Practices of Psychosocial Oncology Summit in Hungary

NSW co-sponsored and coordinated with CancerCare, a psychosocial oncology summit in Hungary funded by the British Ines Kusil Foundation to address cancer care in the region in 2013. This project also provided six grants to start cancer programs in Hungary, as well as a web-based educational course.

Big Shoes Foundation

The Big Shoes Foundation, founded in 2005 in South Africa, is a non-governmental organization that provides consultative services to hospitals in three provinces. Children who have been diagnosed by the hospitals as having a life-limiting illness are referred to the palliative care team. The team supports the child and family focusing on quality of life. An NSW delegation visited the facilities and provided resources. Big Shoes closed in 2012, and NSW is pleased to continue to support the work through Vendula Hospice Care for Children in South Africa.

Brokings Institution

NSW has worked with the Brokings Institution’s Building Bridges Coalition since its inception to increase the number of U.S. volunteers overseas, including social workers and others working in many capacities.

FfHSI (Foundations for Hospices in Sub-Saharan Africa)

NSW is a partner of FfHSI which was founded by NSW/Social Work Pioneer Dr. Berneke Catherine Harper. NSW has endowed a scholarship in her name for social workers who address the psychosocial needs of the seriously ill in Africa. The first three recipients selected by the African Palliative Care Association began their studies in 2012.

Friends of Chernobyl (FOCUS, Inc.)

FOCUS, Inc. seeks to raise public awareness in the United States of the devastating human consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. Composed of social workers, psychologists, and educators, this group serves populations and communities in Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia that were severely affected by the accident. FOCUS, Inc. was the 2001 recipient of the NSAW Foundation’s International Rhodos G. Semet Award. The Foundation also provided a grant to assist centers in the Ukraine in the training of social workers from Chernobyl in pediatric oncology social work.

Institute of Medicine (ICM)

- Global Violence Prevention Forum – NSW serves on the IOM’s Global Violence Prevention Forum aimed at addressing the high burden of global health posed by violence against women and children.
- Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education – NSW is a member of the IOM’s Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education which aims to apply an ongoing, multinational, multidisciplinary approach to exploring promising innovations in health education.

InterAction

NSW is a member of InterAction, the largest coalition of US-based international nongovernmental organizations focused on the world’s poor and most vulnerable people. Collectively, InterAction’s more than 170 member organizations work in every developing country to eliminate extreme poverty, uphold human rights, safeguard a sustainable planet and ensure human dignity for poor and vulnerable populations worldwide by elevating and advancing the goals of the US-based international nonprofit community.

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)

IFSW is a global organization representing over 350,000 social workers in 90 countries. The organization stands for social justice, human rights, and social development through the promotion
of social work best practice models and the facilitation of international cooperation. NASW has been a supporting member and representative of the North American delegation. Host recently NASW in collaboration with the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Council on Social Work (ICSW), created the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development.

Jason Foot

During a delegation trip to India, NASW visited Jaipur Foot, an organization dedicated to ensuring the physical, economic, and social rehabilitation of those who are living with a disability, to enable them to regain their mobility and dignity and become full members of society. The NASW Foundation contributed funds to assist Jaipur Foot develop and distribute prosthetic limbs for those in need.

Korean Association of Social Workers (KASW)

KASW and NASW partnered to place a KASW staff member in Washington, DC, for a year-long professional exchange. In addition, three NASW Presidents traveled to Korea and NASW has hosted several Korean social work delegations.

People to People Ambassador Program

NASW has a partnership with the People to People program and has led 10 professional exchange delegations to nations around the world including a special delegation to hospices in South Africa and a humanitarian trip to Costa Rica in the summer of 2013.

Physicians for Peace

Based on similar goals, Physicians for Peace and NASW signed a memorandum of understanding which encourages the organizations to seek to conduct activities that complement and strengthen the work of both groups in developing countries. Efforts are focused on improving the health and lives of children and their families. In 2010, after the Haiti earthquake, the NASW Foundation raised funds for the relief efforts. Fifty percent of the donations raised were allocated to Physicians for Peace so the organization could provide services to children who had lost a limb by providing them with prosthetics and additional assistance with recovering from the tragedy.

Tanzania Social Workers Association (TASWO)

NASW has been working with TASWO since 2011 in building the infrastructure and services of the Association, and leaders from the organization have visited the NASW office several times. Likewise, NASW participated in several trainings as well as the Annual TASWO Leadership Retreat and Social Work Conference to offer technical assistance.

The One Campaign

NASW is a partner of The One Campaign, which is an effort to rally Americans one-by-one to fight the emergencies of global AIDS and extreme poverty. As a founding partner, in the summer of 2005, representatives from NASW travelled to Scotland with organizers of the ONE Campaign to urge President Bush to advocate for human rights and other policies that will help achieve the Millennium Development Goals established by the United Nations.

United Nations

NASW secured Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) status through the United Nations in 2010.

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – NASW has been involved in the Campaign for U.S. Ratification for the CRC, which is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights—civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) – The CEDAW Treaty helps women and girls to go to school, own and inherit property, take part in public life, and fight violence and oppression, and NASW has been a firm supporter of the ratification of this effort.

International Social Work Disaster Assistance Fund

The Social Work Disaster Assistance Fund was established to provide financial assistance to social workers affected by disasters. Donations go directly to the social workers and/or social welfare organizations that can provide assistance to those who suffered loss and were in need of financial or other assistance due to the disaster. By assisting social workers directly, they, in turn, are able to serve others.

The Disaster Assistance Fund has assisted social workers affected by:

- Japanese earthquake and tsunami, 2011 – Following the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, NASW contacted the Japanese Social Work Association and donated 100 percent of the funds raised to social workers to provide services to those affected by the disaster.
- Haitian earthquakes, 2010 – The NASW Foundation partnered with the National Hospice Foundation in supporting Holy Angels Hospice in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the Albert Schweizer Hospital in Deschapelles, Haiti, and Boston-based Partners in Health. All three organizations provided palliative and end-of-life care to severely injured victims of the earthquake. Funds were also allocated to Physicians for Peace to provide services to children who lost limbs in the disaster.
- Indonesian tsunami, 2006 – Donations to assist social workers affected in the aftermath of the 2006 tsunami were distributed through the International Federation of Social Workers.
- Hurricane Katrina, 2005 – The NASW Foundation Disaster Assistance Program was launched after Hurricane Katrina to provide financial assistance directly to social worker affected by hurricane. Donations help them re-establish their lives, so they can continue to assist others.

Memoranda of Understanding:

- American International Health Association
- Armenian Social Work Association
- Cambodia Association of Social Workers
International Delegations

NANW leads delegations of social workers to international destinations. These delegations have the opportunity to exchange best practices with social work colleagues in other countries and to assist with local social welfare projects. Countries visited have included:

- Costa Rica, 2013
- South Africa, 2012
- India, 2011
- Brazil, 2011
- Cuba, 2011
- Russia, 2010
- Egypt, 2009
- South Africa, 2008
- Cambodia, 2007
- China, 2006

2 Comments

Jennifer

Dear NANW,

I am so excited to learn about SWAN and would love to be considered for future collaboration and learning projects and trips. How may I sign up for the SWAN email list?

Thank you,
Jennifer Kavik

Elena

Hi,

Where and when would the next delegation be? I'm glad NANW has these kinds of exchanges 😊. Thanks.

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