



**From the Editor's Desk**

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## From the Editors

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### Midway in a Presidential Term and Sliding Deeper into Economic Problems

#### Looking Back, Looking Ahead

It was only two years ago that the United States elected with great pride and expectations, Barack Obama who promised great change for the American people and was well received in many countries of the world. President Obama inherited two wars, one in Afghanistan and one in Iraq and an American military that remained with a force size and posture that dates back more than a half century. He also inherited an economy that was shedding jobs at a fierce pace, a manufacturing base that had been eviscerated in many areas but most importantly in the Middle West from Illinois to Ohio and a banking and brokerage system that had gone on a speculative bender creating a variety of synthetic security products that had collapsed bringing down the bloated real estate market and creating a long term threat for the municipal bond market. To address the crisis Obama followed the program created by George Bush and appointed persons to the Treasury and the Federal Reserve that would use expansion of the money supply to address the deflationary crisis that was developing. He supported the Bush surge in Iraq and then moved its proponent to the command in Afghanistan. He created two important policy achievements with his universal health care system and substantial tax cuts and tax incentives to spur economic activity.

With banks, brokerages and automobile manufacturers saved by government investments, the nation waits to see if the economy will rebound. There is little evidence that it is with nominal unemployment running above 9 percent and real employment about 18 percent. A huge overhang of real estate exists in most cities of the nation and retail sales remain lethargic. The public's reaction to the state of affairs is evident in the shift of control of the House of Representatives from the President's party to the opposition. With the Federal stimulus gone most states are facing immense shortfalls in revenues and budgets will

require reducing state and municipal programs. Lagging economic activity means reduced human services and a more difficult job environment for social workers.

All in all the next two years may consist of limited legislative activity at the Federal level given the oppositional stance of the two political parties. Until an economic recovery truly begins there should be only a more rancorous public atmosphere.

#### In This Issue

The topics in this issue, Volume 13, Number Three, reflect these important activities. It opens with the Special Issue Editor's overview followed by Carter's "Perceptions of professional intervention by parental advocates for autism: A need to improve practice with self-help groups and developmental disabilities". Next, Service Learning and Millennial Students: Benefits and Challenges to a Team-Based Approach" examines a popular theme of generational personality characteristics and efforts to craft more effective learning environments. This is followed by Landuyt, et al's creation of a social capital intervention to improve campus policing: "Policing and Social Capital in a Campus Setting". Ausbrook examines organizational features in Child Welfare Supervisors – "Stuck in the Middle: The Impact of Middle Management Status" Tubbergen reviews David Mechanic's book *Mental Health and Social Policy: Beyond Managed Care, 5th ed.*

Austin, Texas and Columbia, Missouri

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