**2016-2017 Friend of School Social Work ​Award**

**Dr. Aaron Thompson**

**University of Missouri, School of Social Work**

Dr. Thompson is extremely involved in promoting school social work, not only in Columbia, Missouri and Boone County, but throughout the state and internationally. He recently received the 2016 Society for Social Work and Research Deborah K. Padgett Early Career Achievement Award, as well as the 2015 Distinguished Faculty Service Award from the College of Human and Environmental Sciences at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

He has published extensively regarding the role of the school social worker in addition to presenting worldwide on such topics as “The State of American School Social Work 2014: Initial findings from the 2nd national school social work survey.”

Dr. Thompson’s work and research is primarily focused on collaborations with schools and community service agencies to determine the best ways to help school-aged children with social, emotional, and behavioral health concerns. It is a complex issue involving the child, the family, school personnel, school systems, and community services. There are various levels of intervention depending on the needs of the child and of the family, as well as various prevention strategies.

Dr. Thompson has collaborated with Drs. Wendy Reinke and Keith Herman in the College of Education over the past three years to develop several projects in area schools—including the development of a coordinated, multidisciplinary, and collaborative initiative across six school districts in Boone County to address the mental and behavioral health of students. Another project is to evaluate a selective intervention program for 5th grade students who exhibit disruptive and challenging classroom behaviors. And their most recently funded project involves the creation of the Family Access Center for Excellence (FACE) of Boone County which will serve as a mechanism to expand access and improve coordination of existing services for youth and families, and also to improve the quality of existing services in Boone County.

Dr. Thompson’s work with a number of community agencies and schools to determine the efficacy of programs and to help determine better ways to meet the needs of school-aged children and their families is ongoing.