

Counseling and Human Services Departmental Newsletter

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Breaking Barriers in CHS: Advocators of Today



Dr. Paul Datti

From the Acting Department Chair:

Welcome to the Fall 2015 Counseling and Human Services Departmental Newsletter! Thanks so much to our terrific faculty specialist, Brandice Ricciardi, our amazing graduate assistants, Corrine Wolff and Kathleen Brown, and all of the other "newsletter helpers" for putting this quality document together! It's always a pleasure to read these newsletters, as they are a consistent reminder of the quality faculty, staff, and students that we have in our department. As Acting Chair while Dr. Lori Bruch is on a well-deserved sabbatical, I am proud to be in this leadership role and to have a part in propelling the quality work and climate that permeates our department.

As always, this newsletter's theme is an important one. As professionals and budding professionals in counseling and human services, we are called upon to advocate and to break barriers for our clients and for the profession on a regular basis. Actually, through our work,

we are integral in fostering quality, barrier-free services for many. When I reflect on my time here in the CHS department, a little light grows inside of me as I think of how my colleagues work tirelessly in their practices and service endeavors to propel this very thing. Most importantly, via their teaching, they are able to convey this important message and demonstrate it as a way of life to our students. In turn, our students go on to be professionals who "set the world on fire" in the spirit of *cura personalis* and continue the domino effect of advocacy and breaking barriers.

Here are a couple of recent examples of this very thing. Our own CHS junior and secretary of CHSA, Jessica Schmidt, while watching the University's television station, noted that someone used the "R word" on air. Knowing that the person who used it likely meant no harm, but also how the mere use of it indeed could be harmful, she wrote a respectful letter to the producers explaining the potential negative effects of this terminology. She even cited Rosa's Law, passed in 2010, that removed the word "mental retardation" from federal health, education, and labor policy and replaced it with person first

language! Another example occurred with our own CHS senior and CHSA treasurer, Marissa DiBella. Being an advocate for the LGBT community, Marissa became upset with the portrayal of Caitlyn Jenner by a costume shop that was selling both Bruce and Caitlyn Jenner Halloween costumes. Knowing that the transgender population experiences significant marginalization as it is, she advocated and educated her friends and others on social media on how this could propel the already high stigma permeating the population. I like to think that these gestures are a direct reflection of the climate and mission of the CHS department, how we live our lives, and how we teach our students the importance of advocacy and breaking barriers. Read on for more information and more examples of the CHS department's commitment to the theme of this newsletter, and consider how you can advocate and break some barriers yourself. This is an especially important time of year to concentrate on this. So as we continue on our mission to be "men and women for others," take some time to reflect on all that you have and how you may help others during this upcoming holiday season. And Happy Holidays...which ever you may celebrate.

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Breaking Barriers

By: Emily Carson (School Counseling Student)



Sitting in the graduate assistant office a few weeks into the semester, I was asked to think of a theme for our newsletter - the white board seemed like a perfect place to brainstorm. Most of my suggestions revolved around using “CHS” as an acronym – I got a good list going after just 10 minutes and figured my job was done. Really, it was just the beginning.

As one of my ideas, “Challenging Human Stereotypes,” was transformed into this semester’s theme, “Breaking Barriers,” I realized I took the easy way out. That list I came up with was nothing more than stringing some words together - if it sounded good, I wrote it down. It is clear I must continue to work on breaking my own barriers, one of them being is approaching situations too strongly. I wrote the first ideas that came to mind without absorbing what each acronym would mean for the department, the university, and its students. Self-reflection is crucial to uncovering my strengths as well as growing edges. In the future, I want to take time to think about many options before jumping to a solution.

In wake of this semester’s theme, I challenge others to ask themselves “What are your personal barriers?” “How can you move past them to better yourself?” Take that risk, choose the road less traveled, and find ways to look those barriers in the eye and say “HA!” I promise I will do the same.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling



Dr. Katie Purswell

I think that one of the major barriers for the clients of CMHC counselors is the cost associated with quality clinical mental health counseling. Many clients who are most in need do not have insurance or other financial resources to pay counselors in private practice. At the same time, many agencies, where the fee may be reduced or waived, struggle to keep strong counselors due to lower rates of pay and high workload. Those agencies that are able to combat burnout in the employees and offer high quality counseling at a reduced price may have long wait lists.

CMHC counselors can address the concern of limited access to mental health care in a variety of ways. Through advocacy, interns and counselors in agencies can work with the leadership of the agency to implement burnout prevention strategies among the staff. They can also set a good example for other counselors by committing themselves to wellness strategies. In doing so, counselors can improve the quality of an agency by minimizing turnover and increasing a focus on growth. This is something I have seen our students doing at various stages throughout the program.

Another way CMHC counselors can help increase clients' access to quality mental health care is through volunteering their time to work with clients *pro bono*. This is something that many of our students are already doing in the Leahy Clinic. Although students do earn internship and practicum hours in the Leahy Clinic, the focus is on providing clients who do not have insurance with free counseling services rather than on accruing hours. Post-graduation, counselors in private practice can continue to provide some *pro bono* or reduced fee work, balancing the necessity of making money with the counseling philosophy of helping all without discrimination.

Darren Rivera



Working to break barriers is not a task easily accomplished alone. As a counselor in training at the University, I recognize that in all the ways I have advocated for change, I have never done that work alone. Now I get to have great conversations with students about issues happening in the world today, about culture, about personal journeys, and about the needs of others. Today, I break barriers by engaging in open dialogue to identify the needs of others and myself. I work toward building a base of knowledge about topics important to me like anti-sexual violence, gender equity, and cultural competency. As a graduate assistant out of the Multicultural Center, I do my best to get to know others and their respective thoughts and experiences, because I believe that everything makes sense within context. I hope that by participating in social justice activities I can encourage others to help me in building bridges and advocating against sexual violence.

School Counseling

Dr. Julie Cerrito



The topic of breaking barriers as it applies to the school counseling profession directly aligns with the advocacy work that myself, Dr. Eschbach, and Dr. Wilkerson are engaged in with respect to the First Lady Michelle Obama's "Reach Higher" Initiative. This initiative aims to have more students complete their education beyond high school and ultimately reach their post secondary goals and advance their careers. Specifically, this initiative targets underserved student populations including racial and ethnic minority students, first generation college students, and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Often times, these students believe that they are not "college material" and may fail to consider the prospect of attending a college, trade, or technical school (due to barriers such as finances, uncertainty with the college-going process, and lack of role models or mentors). Drs. Cerrito and Eschbach's work, as counselor educators, is to ensure that the University of Scranton's school counseling graduates are well prepared to offer sound college and career advice to the students that they will serve in PreK-12 school settings. As school counselor educators, we understand the vital role that school counselors play and serve as strong advocates for such

Noel Furman, M.S., CCC/SLP

TALKING TO THIN AIR? Communication barriers are not just limited to English-language learners or students with a speech Individualized Education Program. Individuals with limited pragmatic language, emotional maturity, or attention skills are often unable to understand facial gestures, figurative language, sarcasm, or idioms. Because adults hold so much power, misunderstandings can invoke feelings of frustration and fear, in young students. Fortunately for me, I had an exemplary first grade teacher who knew how to break communication barriers. She had a circle hanging on a string at the front of the classroom. One side had a happy face and the other sad. Happy face up and lights on meant that she was pleased. She would make clear, short, repetitive statements about what she liked about our behavior and always directed her students to look at her face as she spoke. Lights off, sad face up, meant displeasure. She explained in short, clear, repetitive, soft toned statements, what she needed the class to do. She did not use idioms such as "simmer down" or vague phrases like "I'm waiting." Her comprehensive and concrete language approach helped us all feel safe and supported enough to perform our best. How can you communicate more effectively?



Rehabilitation Counseling



Dr. Rebecca

Advocacy plays a huge role in the work of a Rehabilitation Counselor. People with disabilities face stereotypes and discrimination across all settings and roles. In our classes we often talk about the social construction of disability and how that contributes to the 2 biggest barriers – Attitudes and Accessibility. Attitudes of others (teachers, employers, family members, the public, as well as rehabilitation professionals) can impact expectations and limit opportunities. Accessibility, both physical and social, can impact a person's ability to be a full member of his/her community.

Regardless of the setting of employment, advocacy is inherent in the role of a rehabilitation counselor. The code of ethics for Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCC Code of Ethics) has an entire section dedicated to advocacy. There are many ways that Rehabilitation Counselors can advocate, and Dr. Bruch and I work to demonstrate this to our students. We bring in speakers who experience disabilities to our classes to raise awareness of the various barriers faced on a daily basis. We annually chair the Northeastern U.S. Conference on disABILITY, which attempts to raise awareness and knowledge on a community level, and we often participate in the National Rehabilitation Association's Governmental Affairs Summit where we meet with our local legislators in Washington, D.C., to discuss policies and legislation affecting individuals with disabilities and their families.

Advocacy on an individual and community wide basis is a very significant aspect of our work and we are so proud of our students and alumni for the advocacy work they do on a daily basis.

As rehabilitation counseling students we are taught to advocate for our clients to make sure they have the best opportunities in life. What happens when they may have a disability and are not sure what resources are available to them? I work as a Social Service Coordinator with clients who are incarcerated; many of my clients have underlying drug and alcohol problems as well as mental health conditions. These factors, in addition to choosing a behavior with negative consequences, can lead to incarceration. My role is to advocate for my clients' best interest, to seek treatment for their addiction or to meet with a counselor to address their mental health. Before I get referred to them, the biggest barrier is self-advocacy and knowing what resources are available to them. My hope is that with every client I meet, they begin to learn new ways of living their life, make informed choices for the future, and learn to advocate effectively for themselves. The biggest reward from working with this population is the significant change that takes place. If the client is open to treatment and follows through, they begin to advocate for themselves, which I hope is what all of my clients do after working with them.



Marsinlen Blackwell

Counseling and Human Services

Margaret Mead once said, “if we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse gift will find a fitting place”. Every individual, counselor and client alike, have a unique combination of cultural group memberships that bring forth different social, biological, political and historical experiences to their lives.

The Counseling and Human Service program promotes an equity driven pedagogy focusing on diversity and multiculturalism. Each course offered in the curriculum touches on the subject of multiculturalism and diversity with specific courses that focus on developing cultural competency in students. These courses educate students on what it means to be a culturally competent counselor in the diverse world we live in through education and experience in the field.

Students begin to understand and develop their strengths as well as challenge their own biases. In a world full of “isms”, the counseling and human service program seeks to foster professionals that are self-reflective practitioners, competent caregivers and community leaders. Students endeavor to empower people through education and service by attending to the needs of the whole person, which includes the communities in which we touch, live and breathe.

Dr. Datti, Dr. Bofo-Arthur and Professor Ricciardi find inspiration in how excited students are as they speak of ways in which they are strengthening their connections to peers, faculty and clients in the community at large. Students work at building therapeutic alliances with these clients to promote lasting relationships, which aid in eradicating the injustices in our society. The culturally competent students from our program create a domino effect by translating their education in the classroom to local human service agencies, helping to break barriers by working with the disenfranchised members of our community and promoting social advocacy.

Advocacy assumes a sense of responsibility on our part to change the status quo in society to become the holders of hope and agents of change for clients. It is so critically important that we as students and faculty take upon this responsibility to ignite the spark in one another “to set the world on fire”.

~ Luke Vitagliano



Sam Bauer

For me addressing barriers is ultimately a discussion of our thinking and some of its limitations. Regardless of our insight, logic, or methodology, when we look at the world we only seeing a part of it. Despite this, I think as humans we don't like incomplete information, so we fill in the blanks. The barriers then, are the cultural narratives, the symbols, and the truisms that due to their accessibility complete those incomplete accounts of information and block our ability to see those subtle and periphery factors that are so important to effectively understanding and working with people. Barriers are therefore not always the grave injustices that appear so blatantly wrong; they are the dogmatism, the assumptions, and the rigidity in our thinking. These things influence all of our thinking; they are a natural product of our environment, emotionality, and history.

Therefore, I think to talk about breaking barriers is essentially a task in self-examination, and maybe asking oneself about their own biases and how those influence their thinking and where they came from. It involves the willingness to see the way circumstance, development, and context influence the way in which we arrive at the truth. Breaking barriers also includes the proactive component of being the person in the room that is willing to be wrong, challenge convention, and bring up the ambiguity in situations. These conversations are what allow us to see others and our world more clearly and orient us towards learning. As a CHS major, this involved being open to the educational process and avoiding the tendency to apply a priori frameworks to the individuals, tasks and challenges I encountered. As a CHS major or maybe someone just starting out in the field, it is tempting to try and make sense of everything in an attempt reduce that initial anxiety of not knowing. I think this is natural and okay to do, but as growing professionals it is our duty to be able to look at that and constantly push both ourselves and others to become more open, fluid, and human.

Counselor Training Center



Reflection on Breaking Barriers (By: practicum student, Sister Sabina Ndunge Muange)

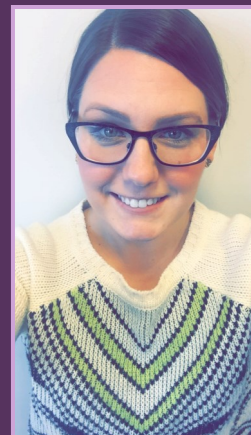
Before I began my practicum, I was open and ready to grow from this experience and all that it entails. I can say that I tried to advocate for my clients in my own small ways. During practicum, I tried to treat my clients with dignity, and to respect their nationality, culture, background, social economic status, sexual orientation, and religion. I tried to see each client as unique. My biggest strength during practicum was my spirituality, which I can say I used to advocate for my clients. As the days unfolded, I began to see counseling as a sacred place, where clients shared their sacred lives. I had experiences where clients would say something like "I do not share this experience often with other people." For me, that connection between me, them, and their "sacred inner world" is what I could call healing or spirituality. Again, being able to see goodness and potential in my clients, as well as accepting them for who they were, despite their issues, is why I can say I broke the barriers as a practicum counselor. Despite these enriching experiences, I also met with some challenges. One of the challenges was when the clients did not show up. I tried to remain positive during this time and hoped that my clients were safe. I began to see this as part of a challenge, even as a future counselor. However, I realized that how I deal with this experience is what mattered. I grew from this experience by being flexible and looking for alternatives. Even during times when some clients had a different worldview from mine, I was able to work with them and allowed them to guide the sessions rather than imposing my views on them.

I also participated in the Peacemakers program. This was another enriching and informative experience. I was touched by the peacemakers' children through the knowledge and the information they had acquired about peace. For me, our mentor, and my fellow practicum counselors, did not have to teach them what peace meant. We just validated what they already knew about peace. I learned more from this program than I could have imagined. There were peaceful gestures expressed by these children, which I never thought would be termed as peaceful. For example, during one of the sessions, one of the children stood and said, "Everyone here is awesome." Another one during the session about peace with other nations stated, "It is beautiful that we all do not look the same." Others expressed that being kind is one way of being peaceful, and of course advocating and promoting peace. I was also struck by the children's sharing about peace with others, with their bodies, with the earth, and with the world. I believe this is an empowering program to continue helping children and of course counse-



I have been fortunate enough to be a part of the Leahy Community Center for the past two semesters. During this time, I have been able to work with a diverse and underserved population. The clients are the number one priority and I have enjoyed supporting them through my counseling work. Counseling at the Leahy Center has been an incredibly rewarding, yet challenging experience. I feel that a significant aspect of being a part of the Leahy team is going above and beyond to make an impact on the clients' lives. I feel I have stretched myself this semester by working with clients who speak Spanish, utilizing translators, and helping individuals through sensitive issues. Advocacy and breaking barriers are what make the Leahy Center such a special community to be a part of and I believe our work goes beyond the 60 minute sessions!

Tori Bradley writes a reflection
on breaking barriers in the
Leahy Clinic



Career Success in CHS

Adapted from The Aquinas article “PCPS Students Enjoy Employment” by Steve DePrimo

The second biggest major at The University within PCPS is counseling and human services. Out of the 61 students that graduated in 2014, 49 students responded to the employment survey sent out by career services. From those 49 students, 47 have either found a full time job or have continued their education. This is a success rate of 96 percent, which is outstanding. Dr. Paul Datti, the acting department chair for the fall of 2015, spoke very highly of his program and how excited he is for the upcoming years.

“Our unemployment rate for graduates has been zero percent, except for one year in which it was five percent, which is still great when compared to the national average.” Datti said. Datti believes that students who come to The University end up with the counseling and human services major because it fits with the Jesuit tradition, service, and wanting to help people. Some would say that the counseling and human services major lines up perfectly with these standards.

“If people are going to come to Scranton in the first place, and then they find a major that really matches up nicely with The University mission and Jesuit ideals, then it just makes the major that much more attractive. Also a lot of people are helpers; they want to help people at some level,” Datti said. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the counseling and human services field will be seeing a rise in job opportunities from 2015 until 2022. There is expected to be a 22 percent increase in job outlook, which is much faster than usual. This can be associated with the great need there is in the country for human and social services.

“Cura personalis is the most important part of the job. If our students can care for the whole person, and they think about all the important things, then hopefully everything else will fall in line,” Datti said.

Advocators in CMHC

CMHC Students Educate King’s College Class about Transgender Individuals By Gabriel Gross

This November, two Clinical Mental Health Counseling graduate students visited King’s College, Wilkes-Barre, to deliver a guest lecture on gender identity. Dominick Petitto and I (Gabriel Gross) were invited to speak in a Human Adjustment course, to educate undergraduate psychology majors about the transgender community. Petitto and Gross discussed the nuances of gender identity, gender transition, social issues affecting transgender individuals, and ways to be a supportive ally. The lecture was delivered on the heels of the November 20th Transgender Day of Remembrance, an annual event commemorating trans individuals who were killed because of their identity. Petitto and Gross hope that continued efforts of education and advocacy will help reduce stigma, discrimination, and violence against this community. The two intend to deliver more lectures on this topic as early as January of next year.

Advocacy Project in CMHC Professional Issues

CMHC Students Advocate for Correctional Officers and Inmates By Gabriel Gross

This semester, Clinical Mental Health Counseling graduate students in Dr. Willis' Professional Issues course were given the task of working as a group to advocate for an underserved population. The class chose to act on behalf of correctional officers and inmates who are affected by mental illness. Several students contacted state representatives to advocate for legislation that would provide more adequate medical and psychosocial resources for mental health in the prison system. Others utilized social media to educate the public about the challenges associated with working in a prison environment, or living with mental illness in prison.

The advocacy project culminated with a collection of stress-relieving products, including stress balls, adult coloring books, journals, prayer cards, and spiritual texts. These items were gifted to the South Canaan Federal Penitentiary. There they will be used to alleviate some of the day-to-day burdens experienced by hardworking correctional officers.

Many of the CMHC students involved reported that the project was fulfilling, that it enhanced their ability to empathize with others, and that it sparked their interest in advocating for their future clients. Acting on behalf of others, the students realized, is a critical part of being a counselor. Many, like Miranda Holdaway, also recognized how advocacy can effect change in both the short- and long-term: "It was important to me to educate [officers'] on the necessity for self-care and make them feel appreciated...I hope that our efforts brought about awareness of the need for more mental health care for correctional officers, and started a movement to put new programs in place to help officers deal with the trauma they face." Such vital change may come sooner than expected: The South Canaan penitentiary has already requested that the students return to educate officers about clinical mental health counseling--a welcome response for these advocates, eager to make a difference.

Undergraduate Rehabilitation Advocate



Hi, my name is **Jessica Schmidt** and I am a junior Counseling and Human Services major. While viewing the Royal Television Network, I heard the R word being used and needed to be an advocate regarding this matter. This is an important issue that I felt needed to be addressed and being an advocate is definitely a way to break barriers!

Person first language and being an advocate is very important as a Counseling and Human Services major. I reached out to the television network about the language that one person used while on the air. During the show, the R word was used out of context and not for any educational purposes. In my email, I stated the history of people with disabilities including Rosa's Law and The Disabilities Rights Movement. The hope for my email was to inform others about this serious matter and to educate others on proper person first language. There are individuals with disabilities, whether you can physically see the disability or not, who are students at the University of Scranton who were probably offended by this person's language. This type of language is offensive to everyone, with or without a disability. Because this term was used in a public atmosphere, I felt that it was important to be an advocate for people with disabilities. I did not intend to receive any recognition by doing this but to rather educate and address the inappropriate and offensive language. There was also no intent to embarrass anyone. Whether someone uses this type of language in loose terms or in front of a lot of people, it is important to educate them why this type of language is inappropriate. This is a very important subject that people need to be more educated on because it is extremely offensive to many individuals. As future Counseling and Human Services professionals it is important to break the barriers between persons with disabilities and those without. One way to start this is by being an advocate. A small act of advocacy can make a big change!

Awards

Rose Kelly Award: Emily Apgar

As a recipient of the Rose Kelly Award, I have a sense of validation. Looking back at who I was as a person both socially and academically coming in as a first-year student, I would have never thought I would be in the position I am today. There are so many other great individuals within the Counseling & Human Services Department, so I was surprised when I received the nomination. This semester has been one of the best for me by far. I believe my involvement this past semester alone has made up for the two previous years where my engagement was minimal. I have been a work study student for the Byron Recreation Center since my first year. More recently I was given the privilege to be a work study student for the Jane Kopas Women's Center as well. I am a first-year PACT presenter and I am also a member of the University Review Board. In receiving this award, I cannot help but say that I am proud of myself for being given the honor in recognizing my extra-curricular and academic accomplishments here at The University of Scranton. I, of course, have to give a special thank you to one of the women who has gotten me here, the woman who has inspired me in so many ways for so many years—my guidance counselor from high school, Mrs. Fallucca.



O'Hara Award: Dana Marmo



When researching the different counseling programs, I realized the Rehabilitation Counseling program would be the best fit for me. After I obtained my prerequisites for the program, I applied to the Rehabilitation program and was accepted. Immediately, I felt at home. Not only were the courses interesting, but I was also doing well academically.

Recently, I received an e-mail stating that I was the recipient of the Graduate Frank O'Hara Award. This award is given to the graduate student, who is approximately half way through their studies, with the highest GPA in their program. The award is in honor of the late Frank O'Hara, who worked for the University for 53 years. I was tremendously honored and thankful to receive this award. Not only did this award validate all of my hard work, but it showed me that I am on the right career path. I have not always been a great student, my past physics professors can attest to this fact, but with hard work and perseverance any one can achieve success.

After graduate school, I would like to obtain my LPC and practice as a counselor in the Lackawanna community. I want to go on to help others achieve their personal goals through counseling. Currently, my focus is on completing my graduate education and learning as much as I can so I can better serve my future clients.

Awards Continued...

Liz Vohar, a 2011 graduate of the School Counseling program, received the Prince William Regional Counselor's Association award for Humanitarian of the Year in May 2015 at the county level. Her nomination was then sent to the state level for the Virginia Counselor's Association Humanitarian of the Year and she was the recipient for that as well.



"The Humanitarian and Caring Person Award is an annual award established to recognize a member who truly cares for the welfare of others and who cares about social issues and problems. What is sought is the honoring of persons who give to others without fanfare or expectation of reward other than personal satisfaction in seeing other persons made happier or the social milieu given more integrity" (vcacounselors.org).

Liz started working in Prince William County during the 2013-2014 school year. She currently works at Yorkshire Elementary and has applied for Yorkshire to become a RAMP school. In addition to her professional success, Liz has been a leader in different service programs: coat drives, Un-Trim a Tree Program, Girls on the Run, and First Lady's Reach Higher initiative. Liz is currently working toward her LPC hours.

Congratulations to our 2011 School Counseling Program Graduate who received Humanitarian of the Year in May 2015

Liz Vohar began pursuing her Master of Science in School Counseling Fall 2008. She completed her MS degree Spring 2011, and continued to pursue her CAGS degree. She completed her CAGS spring 2012. While she was pursuing her degree, she set herself apart from others with her motivation, commitment, academic competence, and skill in working effectively with her peers. While she was a student, she presented a poster session at the Spring 2012 Pennsylvania School Counseling Association. School counseling faculty were always impressed that "she was focused on learning, not necessarily doing work to get the grade". Even during her internship placement, Liz successfully adjusted to the demands, work expectations, and school culture and school climate issues at her school. She stepped back, looked at the situation, and moved forward in a collaborative manner. We have seen Liz follow that pattern in so many of her endeavors and are very proud of her accomplishments.

--School Counseling Faculty

DisAbility Conference



4 undergraduate students attended this year paid by CHSA. From left to right: Sean Bassler, Allison Smith, Marissa DiBella, Mary Ellen Kane



Mary Ellen Kane, CHS major, Class of 2017, pictured with Rebecca Alexander, writes about her experience at the Disability Conference.

On October 21, faculty, staff, students, and community members gathered for the 14th Annual Northeastern U.S. Conference on disABILITY. The theme was “You’re Hired! Vocational Rehabilitation Works!” and the engaging speakers provided a comprehensive understanding of vocational rehabilitation. Though most of the focus was on legislation and benefits of employment for people with disabilities, the themes of the speakers were applicable to any field of counseling. The first keynote speaker, Laura Owens, President of TransCen, stressed the importance of getting to know clients personally and in various settings to discover their strengths, instead of making assumptions based on perceived deficits. David DeNotaris, Executive Director of PA OVR, encouraged us to be mentors and coaches who will help people believe in themselves and reach heights that they could not have imagined for themselves. The evening keynote speaker was Rebecca Alexander, a psychotherapist, author, fitness instructor, extreme athlete, and advocate who has Usher’s Syndrome Type 3 and is simultaneously losing her vision and hearing. Rebecca spoke extensively about the difficulties of coming to terms with the loss of those senses, how it affected her as a college student and young adult, and how she stays positive. She sees everything as a process: you may think you have control over it but another situation will come along and force you to adapt, and that’s okay. By allowing herself to be vulnerable, to experience the loss and all the emotions that go along with it, Rebecca can appreciate the strengths and assets she has developed through this process. Each speaker was passionate and optimistic, creating an inspiring environment for those in attendance.

-Mary Ellen Kane ‘17

PCA Conference

Two faculty members, Drs. Datti and Cerrito, in the Department of Counseling and Human Services served in leadership positions for the statewide Pennsylvania Counseling Association (PCA) Conference November 6-8 at the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel in University Park, PA. Dr. Datti serves as the current President of the organization and Dr. Cerrito served as a conference chair for the 2015 47th annual conference. The Pennsylvania Counseling Association is a state branch of the Washington, DC based American Counseling Association, the national professional association that represents professional counselors who live and practice in the United States. PCA is an organization of professional counselors who value a collegial community, continuous learning, service to others, visionary leadership, and a commitment to professional ethics and standards of practice. The theme for this year's conference was Striving for More: Keeping Diversity and Social Justice at the Forefront.



Left to right: Corrine Wolff, Kyle Strobel, Dr. Datti (PCA President), Sarah Triano & Melissa Loughney

Eight graduate counseling students volunteered at the conference: Corrine Wolff, Dana Raciti, Marisa McTernan, Kyle Strobel, Luke Vitagliano, Melissa Loughney, Sarah Kauffman & Sarah Triano.



Left to right (back row): Dr. Jacobs, Sarah Triano, Melissa Loughney, Dr. Cerrito, Dana Raciti, Marisa McTernan & Corrine Wolff

Front Row. Dr. Datti



Pictured are Dr. Willis & Dr. Purswell before presenting at the conference. Their presentation was on identity and development as professional counselors. Dr. Arthur and other counseling students went to their presentation to creatively explore counselor development!

Chi Delta Rho

This semester Chi Delta Rho initiated the Leahy Food Drive and collected peanut butter. Between the 3 organizations, around 30 individual packages were donated. Chi Delta Rho planned and put on a "Wellness Day Afternoon" on December 3rd. The wellness day included a burnout activity for students to take home with them, make your own trail mix, meditation, games and yoga. The event was put on to help students de-stress going into finals week. In the spring semester, Chi Delta Rho will be gathering students to attend the Chi Sigma Iota statewide conference. The conference will be held at Marywood University on April 23. This is a good opportunity for students to present their research posters.



2015-2016 Officers: Corrine Wolff (President), Kristen Vogt (Vice President), Emily Carson (Treasurer), Sarah Triano (Secretary), Dana Raciti (Rehab Liason), Christine Diaz (School Liason), Olivia Ruffin (CMHC Liason)

**Pictured above:* Emily Carson & Corrine Wolff at the Professional Issues Poster Presentation



CHSA, TUA, & Chi Delta Rho donated 30 individual packages of peanut butter, jelly, and crackers to the Leahy Clinic.

Pictured: Kyle Strobel, Emily Carson, Brandice Ricciardi, Corrine Wolff & Katherine Sara

Tau Upsilon Alpha

TUA has been very busy this semester. The new officers Katherine Sara, Sam Bauer, John Esposito, and Allison Smith, have been working hard to get this honor society more involved with the students. Recently, they organized a baked goods fundraising sale through Jerry's for all Seasons to raise money for the Leahy Clinic. The sale was a success with members selling almost 50 baked goods and raising \$150. TUA also participated in a food drive fundraiser for Leahy Clinic with CHSA and Chi Delta Rho. President Katherine Sara spoke to CHSA at its November meeting about TUA to encourage new members to apply this spring and answered questions for underclassmen concerning requirements of the honor society. Be sure to check out TUA's newly decorated bulletin board and answer one of the monthly interactive questions when you walk by it!

2015-2016 Officers: Katherine Sara (President), Sam Bauer (Vice President), John Esposito (Treasurer), Allison Smith (Secretary)



CHSA

This semester CHSA has done a multitude of events giving back to both the University and the local Scranton community. The disABILITY conference this year was on vocational rehabilitation. CHSA was able to send 5 of our club members to the conference. The day was filled with information that can be applied in almost all settings. The annual internship fair consisted of 20 local agencies. It gave students seeking internships the opportunity to meet with potential employers and network. October ended with Safe Trick-or-Treat where local children came to the University to go trick-or-treating in the dorms. CHSA had a table with a matching pumpkin game for kids. It was great to interact with children and families from the local community, and it gave students

the opportunity to give back. Recently, we also participated in the Leahy Clinic Food Drive, where CHSA, TUA, and Chi Delta Rho collected peanut butter, jelly, & crackers. Coming up for the holiday season we are going to be doing Adopt an Angel, where we pick a card off of the Christmas tree in DeNaples and we ask club members to donate a couple of dollars so we can help parents with financial strains during the holiday season. The money we collect will be used to purchase toys so parents have the opportunity to be Santa for their children. Putting a greater focus on service events this semester, it has given club members the chance to get involved on campus and give back to the local Scranton community.

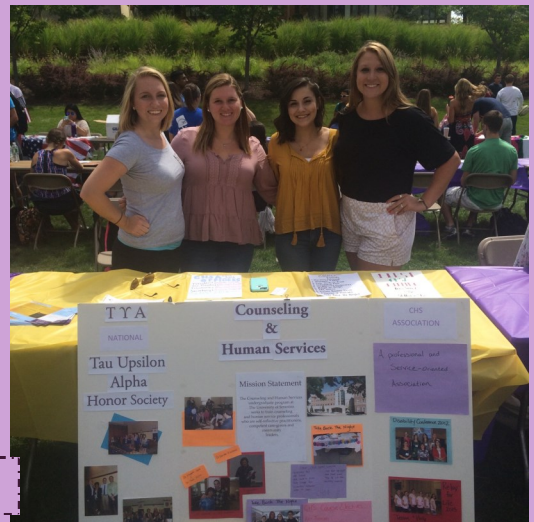
2015-2016 CHSA Officers:

President: Allison Smith

Vice President: Bridget Furdon

Secretary: Jessica Schmidt

Treasurer: Marissa DiBella



CHSA Participates in Healthier U Day



The Counseling and Human Services Association participated at the Center for Health, Education, and Wellness Healthier U Day on September 25, 2015. The Counseling and Human Services Association (CHSA) table helped to promote both emotional and multicultural wellness. Our theme was Mental Health Stigmas Around the World. The main goal was to show how differently mental health issues are viewed in other countries and cultures around the world. Our main activity at the table for students was to write on a sticky note how they could prevent the spread of mental health stigma. By the end of the event we had nearly 100 postings.

Professional Achievements/Conferences

Dr. Wilkerson :

Publications:

Barna, J., **Wilkerson**, K., & Morgan, S. (2015). An overview of comprehensive school counseling program assessment instruments to inform future research. In Ideas and research you can use: VISTAS 2015, Article 65. Retrieved from <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/vistas>

School Counseling Publication:

Eschbach, L., Cerrito, J., & Wilkerson, K. (2015, October). Innovative approaches to school counseling curriculum design and implementation.

Workshop presented at the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision's national conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Cerrito, J. A., & Eschbach, L. A. (November, 2015). Reaching higher: School counselors helping Pre-K through 12 students navigate post secondary options by promoting college and career readiness in Pennsylvania. Workshop presented at the Pennsylvania Counseling Association Conference, State College, PA.

Dr. Datti:

Publication:

Datti, P. A., & Jacob, E. J. (2015). A vocational development group program for men living with HIV/AIDS in suburban and small city areas. *Journal of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association*, 14(1), 2-11.

Professional Service:

President, Pennsylvania Counseling Association, July 2015 – present.

Act as liaison between PCA and its several divisions/chapters, and the American Counseling Association. Assists in planning conferences, presentations, outreach activities, trainings, advocacy, and related professional activities for the association. Advocate for the profession on several issues, including on Capitol Hill (DC) for counseling-related legislation and issues, include allowing Licensed Counselors in the VA training program and to be eligible for Medicare Reimbursement.

Dr. Purswell:

Publications:

Purswell, K. (2015). The extraordinary 11-year-old. In D. C. Ray (Ed.) *A therapist's guide to child development: The extraordinary normal years* (pp. 152-164). New York, NY: Routledge.

Purswell, K., & Stumaker, H. L. (2015). Expressive arts in supervision: Choosing developmentally appropriate interventions. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 24(3), 103-117. doi:10.1037/a0039134

Award:

Rug Award, CHS Department

Presentations:

Purswell, K., & Willis, B. T. (2015, November). *Identity and development as professional counselors: United profession and diverse individuals*. Pennsylvania Counseling Association Conference, State College, Pennsylvania.

Stulmaker, H. L., Jayne, K. M., & **Purswell**, K. (2015, October). *Developing a multiculturally-responsive pedagogical practice: Creative and inclusive teaching strategies for counselor educators*. Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Dillman Taylor, D., **Purswell**, K., & Blount, A. (2015, October). *Transforming your classroom: Encouraging student involvement and promoting active participation in assessment*. Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Purswell, K. (2015, June). *A humanistic approach to promoting high-level thinking in counselors-in-training: Attitudes and strategies for the classroom*. Association for Humanistic Counseling Conference, Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Cerrito

Publications:

Behun, R. J., Owens, E. W., & **Cerrito**, J. A. (in press). The amended child protective services law in Pennsylvania: Implications for mandated reporters. *The Journal of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association*, 14(2).

New Faculty

Dr. Susan Boafo-Arthur

Dr. Boafo-Arthur made her way up to the University of Scranton after gaining many degrees and much experience. She received her Undergraduate Degree in Psychology from the University of Ghana. She received a scholarship for a Master's Degree in Human Development from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Norway. After completing her two year program she moved to the United States and went to Alabama to get a degree in Psychology. She realized it was not a good fit for her and switched over to Counseling and moved to Mississippi. She was at Mississippi State University from Fall 2010- Fall 2015 where she received her Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and her Doctorate in Counselor Education. She worked in the Student Counseling Services for a year and was also an adjunct instructor for the Counseling Department for the Spring 2015 semester. When asked why she was attracted to Scranton, Dr. Boafo-Arthur said, "I wanted to move north. I applied to Scranton, got an interview, and loved how welcoming the environment was. I liked the feel of the city, it was like being back in Norway".



Dr. Boafo-Arthur's Contribution to Breaking Barriers

Currently, Dr. Boafo-Arthur teaches three classes this semester: Counseling Theories, Case Management & Interviewing, and Multicultural Counseling. She is currently working on getting her LPC. She wants to expand and gain expertise on immigrants and international students and their experiences. She is currently working on a chapter that will focus on "Academic Misconduct among International Students." This will be published in *Handbook of Research & Academic Misconduct in Higher Education*. She has already completed another chapter titled, "Help seeking behavior of international Students," and this will be published in 2016 in *Handbook of Research on International Students Mobility, Services & Policy in Higher Education*.

In terms of breaking barriers, she is working on the Chapter about International Students and Academic Integrity. Educationally she has big plans: "I want to try and develop a class for counseling migrant populations in the future. I want to be able to provide opportunities for students to gain more experience and to find creative ways to apply their knowledge. Examples I have thought of but have not figured out how to put into action yet are: having the students take the Naturalization Test, so they can have an understanding of how difficult it is to pass that test to become a citizen in the U.S. Also having a Visa Classification Process section of the class and have students learn about the different types of visa classifications, the difficulties in securing Visas, and the processes that must be in place in order to stay in the U.S. These practical experiences would allow the students to be more aware of the barriers that exist across cultures and come up with ways to break them down in the future".

Holiday Fun Fact



This semester we asked faculty “What was your most memorable holiday gift received or given?” Here are some fun answers from our faculty members!

Dr. Cerrito: “I got a Ph.D. puppy!” (a gift after she received her doctoral degree)

Dr. Datti: “Gifts are nice and all, but not terribly memorable for us. What is most memorable though is the terrif-

ic party at my mom's every Christmas Eve when Frank and I get the gift of wonderful family, a mass by my uncle, and then sleeping over mom's with our dog only to wake up in the morning to the smell of a great breakfast...”

Professor Ricciardi: “Each year as the holidays approach my family tries to find unique ways in which we can surprise each other, though I would have to say my most memorable gifts have usually involved ways in which we try to come together and visit as a group. One instance that comes to mind happened about four years ago when my mother and stepfather brought my 94-year-old grandmother to Scranton for the Christmas Season. We had a wonderful family gathering complete with ridiculously fun pictures with “Santa”, lots and lots of food and cookies and she stayed in Scranton for almost six months! Though she has since gone back to Florida where she lives it was a Holiday event and months of memories that I will always remember!”

Dr. Purswell: “One thing that was really special to me as a child was that my grandmother would take me book shopping for 2-3 books every year for Christmas. It was so fun to get to browse through the huge bookstore and pick out whatever books I wanted.”

Dr. Eschbach: When I was cleaning out my parents' house before they moved (they had lived in this home for 60 years!) I found letters I had received in college. My sister (who was 5 at the time) drew me a picture of how her room looked. My brother wrote me a letter about "what was new" including his new nickname, and his favorite sports team, and what he was doing with his friends, and asking for details about college life (he was 13). I framed both letters and gave them as Christmas presents to them.

Dr. Willis: The most memorable gift that I can remember was a super nintendo game from when I was growing up. My family could open one present on Christmas Eve, and I opened Donkey Kong Country, and I remember playing with it along with my sister later into the night on Christmas Eve and having a special time together.

Recent Event

Dr. Cerrito hosts ACA Webinar for Trauma Series

Dr. Cerrito, School Counseling Director in the Department of Counseling and Human Services, was invited to host a webinar for the American Counseling Association (ACA) Webinar Series on Trauma. The webinar integrates many dimensions of professional development on relevant topics of trauma. In this series, the basics of trauma will be explored along with contemporary issues spanning several practice settings. The series included timely and relevant sessions that benefit clinical, school, and college counselors. Dr. Cerrito, along with two other colleagues from other institutions discussed how to counsel students who have experienced trauma and will offer practical recommendations at the elementary, secondary, and college levels. The webinar took place on Wednesday, November 11, 2015 from 1-2 PM.

HS-BCP

Human Services Board Certified Practitioner (HS-BCP)

Graduates of the CHS program are eligible to sit for the Human Services - Board Certified Practitioner (HS-BCP) exam to receive the HS-BCP credential. The credential allows for independent verification of practical knowledge and educational background in human services. With increased competition in this growing field, becoming board certified in human services shows attainment of high standards and allows you to stand out as a part of a distinguished group known for commitment to maintaining excellence in the field. With the number of human services jobs expected to climb rapidly this decade, the HS-BCP credential can help launch a rewarding career. Note that this is one of the very few credentials offered at the undergraduate level. Because of our program's accreditation status with CSHSE, University of Scranton CHS majors who have 15 credits or less to complete are eligible to apply for the credential and sit for the examination prior to graduation. Please see the Center for Credentialing Education's (CCE) website for more information on the credential and exam: <http://www.cce-global.org/HSBCP>.