Greetings everyone!

I hope this edition of the newsletter finds you well. I am writing from warm and sunny New Orleans, LA where I’m presenting at the ACA conference. Actually, I presented last night and today I felt inspired to share an experience with all of you.

A colleague and I presented a three-hour learning institute last night on strength-based trauma treatment. I’ve never presented a Learning Institute before, but it began to feel like it might be a bigger deal than I am used to. We had two volunteers assigned to help us with our presentation. We had talked with these two graduate students before the presentation started and learned that one of them, Jen, was from North Dakota. She is a single mom with two kids and was starting a new career as a counselor. I mentioned in passing that there was no water on the podium and the water fountains didn’t work. Three hours is a long time to talk without a drink.

About five minutes later Jen came in holding two bottles of water. She quietly placed the bottles on the stage.


“I bought them,” she replied.

“Wait. You bought those with your own money?”

“Well, yeah!” she said a little sheepishly…maybe afraid that she had done something wrong. She hadn’t, obviously. I think I was just so caught off guard by this simple act of kindness.

“Well let me pay you for them,” I said, pulling out my wallet.

*Continued on next page...
“Really, it’s no big deal,” she stopped me. “When you give a total stranger a kidney, two bottles of water isn’t something to worry about.”

Her story moved me. This single mom, working two jobs and raising two kids, had gone through the process and the surgery to donate a kidney…to a total stranger. “I didn’t really have to do anything,” she explained. “I just laid there and slept.”

“I am going to have to challenge you,” I replied. “That was really brave.”

“I guess so,” she said. “But it’s really kind of cool. Now I’m forever connected with this other person who I didn’t know before.” And she walked out of the room.

This has been sitting with me ever since. While I’m not sure any of us should be expected to give a kidney to a total stranger, I wonder how much kinder we could all be? And what the world would look like if we were? I know that I can use anger as a mask, hiding what I really feel and using it to protect myself from others. But kindness isn’t just the absence of anger. It’s an overt act. It’s giving of oneself to help others, whether in big ways (like giving a kidney) or small (like getting someone water when they’re thirsty).

I’ve been trying to be kinder, and meeting Jen has helped to remind me of the power of kindness. I’ve also wondered what I did in that moment that made Jen react anxiously when I asked about the water. She seemed nervous, as if doing something kind for someone was a mistake.

Kindness should never be a mistake. Kindness can be a ripple; it feels like throwing a stone in a pond, and watching the ripples flow from it. Jen’s act of kindness was the stone. How I behave differently in the world is a ripple. And maybe sharing the story with you can help that ripple form another. Chances are Jen decided to go buy those bottles of water because of the kindness that others have shown to her, a ripple from someone else’s act of kindness, who I will never know but certainly appreciate.

Plus, it’s kind of cool. Now I’m forever connected with this other person who I didn’t know before.

Be well, friends. I wish you all the best as we wrap up another academic year.

- Dr. Owens
On Friday March 22nd students arrived at the graduate center to take the CPCE comprehensive exam. As many students were anxious, sleep deprived and stressed, Dr. Alessandria and Nicole Rudderow teamed up with CSI to create an event to help ease some of the students’ stress before taking their exam. Mindfulness coloring pages, stress and meditation toys, snacks, empowering messages and cards were provided to the students along with the presence of 3 therapy dogs: Stormy, Nillie, and Zak. All 3 dogs are certified therapy dogs who visited the students offering some extra love and the intention to ease the students’ stress and anxiety. The event was a hit, 21 of the 27 students who took the exam went out of their way to visit the event! Several faculty also popped in to wish students well and greet Stormy, Dr. Alessandria’s Beagle. Everyone loved having Stormy, Nillie and Zak there. Some students shared that the event overall really eased some anxiety and they loved having the therapy dogs there as well as an opportunity to bond with peers in a relaxing environment. Dr. Alessandria hopes to continue this program with department support for future students. A special thank you for all who made this event possible, the wonderful volunteers which include Kirsten Martin, Alyssa Kerns, and Shalyn Leigh. A shout out to CSI for your assistance in providing the food, and drinks. Check out some

Therapy Dogs and the CPCE: A Recipe for Success!

If you have interest in learning more about Animal Assisted Therapy, an elective course will be running Summer II 2019 titled “Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling”. This is open to all counselor education students and meets at 7pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week from July 1 - August 1. The purpose of this course is to focus on the animal-human bond and its therapeutic applications in goal directed activities and interventions. The benefits of animal assisted therapy programs will be examined through a review of current research, best practices, ethical and legal issues in the specialty of AAT. Course covers human/pet volunteer training; animal assisted therapeutic applications; and animals in institutions, residential facilities, and educational settings.

For more information please contact Dr. Alessandria at kalessandria@wcupa.edu.
Publications and Presentations


Neale-McFall, C. W. International Interdisciplinary Conference on Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement, April 2019. Job Satisfaction, Enrichment, and Institutional Policy: Listening to Faculty Mothers – Toronto, ON


Professional Development

Executive Functioning Training
Tuesday, May 7th @ 6-8pm
Delaware County Intermediate Unit

“This training focuses on defining executive function and the core areas affected by executive function. The training will also focus on how deficits in executive function can affect a student’s ability to learn.”

*To register, please contact Rebecca Kelly at rkelly@dciu.org

(Webinar) Distance Counseling: Best Practices in Higher Education
Thursday, May 16th @ 2-3pm

“Dr. Alessandria will share a roadmap of the guidelines, including benefits, limitations, and legal and ethical concerns regarding telemental health services with higher education students.”
Chi Sigma Iota Initiation and Installation Banquet

“The Delta Tau Kappa Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) hosted our inaugural Initiation and Installation banquet on April 11th right here at the Graduate Business Center. The event was a great success! The Delta Tau Kappa chapter was very proud to recognize and initiate 38 new members this school year. Three of these members were also installed as the chapter executive leaders for the 2019-2020 school year (below photos from left to right: Morgan Bright- Chapter Treasurer; Abigail Small- Chapter President; Molly Minahan- Chapter Secretary).

We would like to say congratulations to these new leaders and to all of the new members! It is an honor to be inducted into CSI. Our chapter had the pleasure of having Dr. Nicole Hill, the CSI national president, speak at the banquet. She shared her own stories of leadership and her enthusiasm for leadership and service with us all. Alongside of initiating new members, installing new leaders, and hearing Dr. Nicole Hill speak on leadership principles and inspire us all, our chapter also recognized all of its current leaders and its graduating members. We thank everyone who came to the banquet and helped make it such a success! We cannot wait for next year. See below and the next page for photos from the banquet!”

- Shalyn Leigh, 2018-2019 Chapter President
Delta Tau Kappa Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota: Initiation and Installation Banquet - April 11th, 2019

(Enclosed photos courtesy of Jackie Gualtieri, Media Chair)
Congratulations to the newest CSI Initiates!

- Amilyn Konopki
- Amanda Nickson
- Stephen Hood
- Ashely Hauschild
- Shannon Turner
- Paige Benjamin
- Shannon Lynch
- Megan DiNicola
- Allison Gulnac
- Sarah Fisher
- Krista Lee Pelton
- Carley Weber
- Malika Rathbun
- Olivia Laskaris
- Matthew Ercolani
- Tyler Groody
- Josephine Ely
- Laura Tocci
- Rebekah Rogerson
- Molly Minahan
- Morgan Bright
- Maura McGowan
- Abigail Small
- Natalia McKay
- Kelsey Colgan
- Rachael Garrett
- Julieana Burgoyne
- Amanda Cole
- Luis Ricardo Guzman
- Elizabeth Swierczek
- Haley Faragher
- Emily Mineo
- Bianca Adams
- Julia Powers
- Michael Repace

Congratulations to the new Delta Tau Kappa chapter officers!

- President:
  - Abigail Small
  - AS918388@wcupa.edu

- Secretary:
  - Molly Minahan
  - MM835747@wcupa.edu

- Treasurer:
  - Morgan Bright
  - MB808030@wcupa.edu

**End of the Year Celebrations!**

**Graduation Celebration**

**Thursday, May 2nd @ 5-6:30pm**

Graduate Center, Room 126

The Counselor Education faculty is hosting a Graduation Celebration! There will be food and music to celebrate this outstanding and proudful accomplishment!

**Palace Bowling & Entertainment Center**

**Friday, May 3rd @ 6:30pm**

977 E. Lancaster Ave, Downingtown, PA

Come join your peers and faculty at an end of the year celebration! We have reserved 4 lanes for CSI. You do not have to be a CSI member to attend.
Welcome to the Department!

Brian McGinley is our newest Adjunct Faculty member. Brian earned his undergraduate degree from Bloomsburg University, his social work Masters Degree from Bryn Mawr College, and his school counselor certification from West Chester University. He has worked with the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) for the past 23 years! Brian was initially hired at the CCIU to develop the Reach Partial Hospital Program and his current position there is as a Training and Consultation staff member where he provides trainings and projects for school districts in Chester County.

In his lifetime Brian has worked within the education system, the mental health system, and the drug and alcohol system in all levels of care including inpatient, outpatient, partial, and Intensive Outpatient (IOP). He is a member of the Chester County ACEs Coalition and organizes the Question, Persuade, Respond (QPR) trainings on suicide prevention in Chester County schools.

Brian is a lifelong PA resident having spent his years in Centralia, PA and now Chester County. He is a big baseball fan and even coached and ran leagues for many years! Brian currently teaches *Introduction to Addictions Counseling* in our department and has really enjoyed his first semester here. When you see him around the department, extend your warm welcome!

Program Reminders:

- If you have any news or announcements that you would like to be featured in the next newsletter, please e-mail GAs Lauren Zazzarino and Elizabeth Swierczek at LZ917375@wcupa.edu and ES917241@wcupa.edu
- Please check your D2L daily for department announcements and updates
- Make sure your Degree Candidacy is filed before the start of internship. Follow the instructions on the Degree Candidacy Checklist found in Suite 101. Without the Degree Candidacy form, your internship class will be dropped.
- Finals begin Tuesday, May 7th and end Saturday, May 11th
- Clearances have to be valid throughout each semester of your practicum and internship—don’t forget to renew them! (don’t forget about Liability insurance due each semester too!)
- Apply for graduation the semester before you plan to graduate on myWCU!