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Editor Insights

It happens every year...recognitions, graduations, celebrations! For Chi Sigma Iota International, we are no different than any other. We love to celebrate, especially those who are making a difference as individuals, chapters, or the Society as a whole!

This edition of the Exemplar illustrates how CSI recognizes the achievements of the Society. It includes an overview of CSI DayS at the 2013 ACA convention in March and highlights specific recognitions of the outstanding chapter faculty advisor, practitioner, and small and large chapter programs. Our membership will find these individuals and chapters inspiring and will promote more innovative ideas to be utilized in chapters and at the practitioner levels.

Although this edition only highlights some of the outstanding accomplishments of our Society, readers are also encouraged to visit our website (www.csi-net.org) to review the other award recipients for the year. Additionally, CSI Executive Director Dr. Jane Myers provides an update from the headquarters office on what is occurring for CSI. We have a new journal and are looking forward to submissions on leadership and professional identity. What a great accomplishment for CSI to celebrate!

Can you tell “changes” are in the air for CSI? There are and its exciting! We will talk more about these in the fall, but let’s celebrate what we have accomplished now! •

The CSI Exemplar is distributed three times a year to all CSI members and is the main communication service informing members of current events within the Society and within the counseling profession. Its content represents enthusiasm for academic and professional excellence in counseling.

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Editorial Staff

Editor
Donna M. Gibson, Ph.D. Associate Professor Omega Lambda Iota Virginia Commonwealth University

Associate Student Editor
Bradley McKibben Doctoral Student Upsilon Nu Chi Chapter University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Contact Us
exemplar@csi-net.org
CSI’s fiscal year ended April 30th, and with it my first full year as your Executive Director has come to a close. It has been a year of new opportunities and growth, and the coming year promises more of the same.

Here are few highlights:

Membership
The number of new members grew this year to the highest ever with now more than 89,000 counselors having been initiated into the Society. Both new memberships and renewals exceeded projections made only a year ago. Fifteen new chapters were added and 13 inactive chapters were reactivated during the year, bringing the total number of active chapters to an all-time high of 286.

Webinars
CSI offered 18 one-hour webinars in 2012-13, all free of charge to CSI members with free CEUS upon request. Members can view the webinars live or through our web archive of recordings. Over 1,000 members participated in these webinars in this its first full year to be offered. The registrations for June exceeded 1100 for the single webinar on the new DSM-5!

Annual Reports and Rebates
As of April 30th, 206 chapters submitted Annual Plans; 177 submitted Annual Reports in September of 2012. Last year over $94,000 in rebates was sent to chapters. In the coming year, chapters will receive a rebate of $10 per active member. We expect the amount of money sent to chapters through our rebate program to approach $120,000 in the coming year. CSI is pleased to be unique in providing such a high level of support to counselor education through our chapters. As a consequence, keeping members and alumni members involved remains among the best fundraising strategies for chapters!

Visit csi-net.org/?webinars for details on our live or recorded webinars and free CEUs for members

Member participation and feedback have been positive and our webinar series will continue in the coming year. Our three part legal and ethical series seminar was especially popular. All webinar presenters are CSI members who donate their time pro bono to support professional development needs of CSI members.
Sustainability - “Going Green”
As was reported in the last issue of the Exemplar, CSI has adopted a policy on sustainability and a commitment to “going green.” This is your first all-electronic issue of this publication. We are increasingly using email rather than sending paper letters through U.S. mail, and we are constantly seeking ways to enhance member services.

2013 Summer Executive Council Meeting
(Front row; left to right) Dr. Jane Myers, Executive Director; Dr. Andrea Dixon, President; Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson, Intern; and Melissa Luke, Treasurer. (Back row; left to right) Hayley Stulmaker, Intern; Dr. Michael Brubaker, Secretary; Dr. Craig Cashwell, President-Elect; and Dr. Victoria White Kress, Past-President.

New Exemplar Editor
You may have noticed a new face in CSIs leadership. We are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Donna Gibson for a three-year term as Exemplar Editor. Dr. Gibson was guest editor for our recent special issue on Leadership. With her leadership and the promise of new technology, you may expect to see new features of our publication in the year ahead. Visit csi-net.org/?Exemplar for past issues of the Exemplar.

Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy
CSI’s Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy is well underway. Manuscripts are being accepted and soon will be processed through ScholarOne. Editor Casey Barrio Minton has solicited an outstanding editorial review panel and is working to create our first edition, scheduled for publication in mid-2014. Learn more at csi-net.org/?JCLA.

CSI DayS
Once again CSI DayS during the ACA convention were full of excitement and opportunities to meet new friends and network among CSI members. Our five theme sessions were well attended, most with audiences exceeding 100. Poster sessions were similarly well attended. More than 140 chapters participated in the Annual Business Meeting and lively discussions were held during Chapter Faculty Advisor and Chapter Leader Training sessions. Our Leadership Workshop panel was particularly meaningful, as Drs. Ted Remley, Courtland Lee, and Carol Bobby shared their extensive experiences and ideas as global advocates for counseling.

“CSI’s Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy is well underway”
The Year Ahead

The year ahead will bring the unveiling of CSIs new web site and new and exciting ways for CSI members to network and participate in the benefits of our Society. When you receive an email asking you to log in and review your new member profile, please take a moment to do so. You will find a complete record of every webinar you have attended, will be able to print your own CEU certificates, join groups of counselors for networking within your state and region in addition to your chapter, access all electronic publications, and share your ideas through groups devoted to clinical issues. We’ll even provide training sessions so you can maximize use of our many new web features.

Promoting Excellence in the Profession of Counseling

It is an honor to serve as your Executive Director, and to work with you to implement CSIs mission of promoting excellence in the profession of counseling. Please contact me at any time to share your thoughts about how we can better serve you as we work towards this common goal. •
Meet the New CSI President
Interview with Dr. Andrea Dixon
by C. Peeper McDonald, Chi Epsilon Chapter, Georgia State University.

It was an honor for me to interview Dr. Andrea Dixon, not only because she is the newly installed CSI President, but also because she is an esteemed faculty member where I take great pride in calling home, Georgia State University. In my time with Dr. Dixon, I asked her about the goals she has for CSI and her perception of CSI’s purpose.

As a way to honor the history of CSI and the goal since it’s inception to be an international organization, Dr. Dixon’s presidential theme is global outreach and advocacy. More specifically, her goals for the upcoming year are to increase CSI’s international image, while increasing chapter membership outside of the U.S. She stated that an important question that she often asks herself is, “How can we bridge those relationships and be a partner with other countries to offer preventative and wellness-based services around the world?” In this respect, CSI is certainly gaining momentum as a tenacious international bridge.

Dr. Dixon further shared that the purpose of global outreach is to share with other countries what CSI is about as well as to uphold standards of counseling. She stated that this is of great importance because though we have numerous accrediting bodies in the U.S. that uphold standards, CSI has an opportunity to be a strong presence of counseling standards in the international arena. When asked about her perception of the purpose of CSI, Dr. Dixon responded that the purpose of CSI is to perpetuate leadership and advocacy among all counselors and to be a role model for counseling excellence. One area that Dr. Dixon shared that she is passionate about improving is increasing the membership and engagement of clinical professionals.

When asked what can be done to increase professional membership and engagement, Dr. Dixon explained that there were several recent things that have occurred to help with
“My goal is to keep us growing in a way that we are just as relevant in the future as we are now.”

this, for example, CSI’s continued working relationship with CACREP is exemplified in CACREP’s recent Guiding Statement that underscores the important professional service roles CSI members play as volunteers both in their chapters and in CSI International. Furthermore, the re-vamped CSI website, the new CSI journal (JCLA), and offering free webinars to members will help make CSI more accessible to professional clinicians. The question remains of how to get professional members involved and excited about CSI. To this, Dr. Dixon stated any suggestions are welcome!

For readers who haven’t had the opportunity to meet our new President, she shared, “I’m a dedicated, long-time active member of CSI and I’m a down-to-earth kind of leader where I can be serious and get things done. However, at the end of the day, we’re serving and volunteering and so we should have fun.” Furthermore, Dr. Dixon shared that she wants to make all CSI members proud by having open communication between members and the executive leadership.

During the interview, I couldn’t help feeling the passion she has for CSI and the hope she has for CSI’s future. She left me with these words ringing loud and true: “Eighty years from now, counseling will still be around and since CSI serves the counseling profession, CSI will still be around. My goal is to keep us growing in a way that we are just as relevant in the future as we are now.”

Dr. Andrea Dixon is an Associate Professor in Counseling and Psychological Services at Georgia State University.
CSI DayS 2013: Celebrating Counseling Excellence and Advocacy at the ACA Convention

by Dr. Andrea Dixon, CSI President
Chi Epsilon Chapter, Georgia State University
Hundreds of Chi Sigma Iota professional and student members took part in the celebration of the 2013 CSI DayS recently at the annual American Counseling Association (ACA) convention in Cincinnati, Ohio on March 22-24. This year’s CSI DayS centered on CSI’s commitment to advocacy, leadership, and continuing to grow the counseling profession globally throughout the world.

The CSI DayS’ activities this year promoted the theme of counseling excellence through global networking and advocacy, and included numerous enriching presentations, activities, and networking opportunities. The week was filled with CSI activities, and as in past years, we were pleased to host five CSI major theme sessions with outstanding CSI member-presenters including: Drs. Tom Hohenshil, Norman Amundson, and Spencer Niles; Drs. Mark Young and Andrew Daire; Dr. Carla Adkison-Bradley; Dr. Tom Sweeney; and Drs. Craig Cashwell and Scott Young.

In addition, we hosted 25 education and poster sessions, where many of our professional and student members were able to present their research projects and interests. The poster and educational sessions spanned the entire conference and highlighted the CSI members’ continued interest in fostering our mission of “contributing to the realization of a healthy society by fostering wellness and human dignity through scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership, advocacy, and excellence in counseling.”

Also, on Friday we were pleased to host CSI’s annual Leadership Workshop that focused on counseling excellence through global networking and advocacy, which over 75 CSI members attended. The workshop began by the CSI leadership recognizing the 2013-2014 Leadership Fellows and Interns selected from across CSI’s 286 chapters.

These outstanding leaders, in the early years of their professional careers, will have the opportunity to broaden their awareness and leadership potential in the profession throughout the next academic year. The CSI leadership team hopes to assist these ten individuals in becoming future counseling leaders by developing their skills and competencies that can advance the counseling profession. Each of the Leadership Fellows and Interns will be mentored throughout the coming year by established CSI leaders.
We congratulate the following 2013-2014 CSI Leadership Fellows and Interns, welcome you to the CSI leadership team, and look forward to working with each of you (shown above):

- Haley Stulmaker (Intern); Rho Kappa Chapter, University of North Texas
- Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson (Intern); Alpha Eta Chapter, University of New Orleans
- Alyse Anekstein; Phi Omicron Chi Chapter, Idaho State University
- Andrea Faeth; Upsilon Nu Mu Chapter, University of New Mexico
- Peeper McDonald; Chi Epsilon Chapter, Georgia State University
- Bradley McKibben; Upsilon Nu Chi Chapter, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- Celeste Naik; Chi Sigma Phi Chapter, California State University, Fresno
- Jared Rose; Alpha Omega Chapter, University of Toledo
- Jenifer Ware; Rho Kappa Chapter, University of North Texas
- Claire Williams, Kappa Zeta Chapter; University of Memphis

The remainder of our 2013 Leadership Workshop included a unique and accomplished panel of three of the counseling profession’s leaders and scholars who have promoted counseling excellence throughout the world with their research, advocacy, and leadership efforts.

Dr. Carol Bobby (CACREP Executive Director), Dr. Courtland Lee (Professor of Counselor Education at the University of Maryland, Past President of ACA, and Past President of CSI), and Dr. Ted Remley (Batten Endowed Chair in Counseling at Old Dominion University and...
former Executive Director of ACA) shared their individual experiences and insights on global leadership and advocacy for counseling.

Because this year’s CSI Leadership Workshop theme specifically celebrated counseling advocacy and excellence on a worldwide scale, our speakers highlighted ideas through which we as professionals can promote global research and advocacy for the counseling profession and clients worldwide. Through their unique experiences in leadership and advocacy, they purported that counseling advocacy must be considered as a worldwide challenge in today’s world. We are grateful to have such CSI member-leaders that are willing to share their experiences and insights with counseling professionals at varying spaces in their own professional careers.

“...our speakers highlighted ideas through which we as professionals can promote global research and advocacy for the counseling profession and clients worldwide.”

The Leadership Workshop was followed by the CSI annual Delegate Business Meeting, Awards Ceremony, and the enjoyable CSI reception. The CSI Executive Council, President Victoria Kress, and Executive Director Jane Myers were pleased to present the work we have taken part in over the past year, as well as our CSI committee reports from the year. In addition, the new leaders for the upcoming year were also installed at the Business Meeting, and meeting participants were given the opportunity to win CSI door prizes. Immediately following, this year’s CSI individual and chapter award recipients were honored at the CSI Awards Ceremony facilitated by our Awards Chair, Dr. Amanda La Guardia. Some of these award recipients are highlighted in this edition of the Exemplar but a complete list can be found at www.csi-net.org/?Awards. Friday’s events ended with the annual CSI reception-celebration which had a large crowd of members and friends of CSI. We were pleased to network with those of you who attended and to meet new friends, leaders, and members!

Saturday’s CSI events continued with major theme sessions, poster presentations, and education session throughout the day. In addition, CSI committees and leadership groups were able to convene in order to share ideas and make plans for new projects. On Saturday, CSI hosted: the CSI Committee Chairs Meeting, a special Leadership Fellow/Intern Meeting, various CSI Committee Meetings, the Chapter Faculty Advisors Training, Chapter Leaders Training, and the inaugural meeting of the Editorial Board for CSI’s brand new refereed journal, the Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy (JCLA), Founding Editor, Dr. Casey Barrio-Minton.

Overall, the 2013 CSI DayS 2013 were indeed a celebration of counseling excellence and advocacy, and we could not be more pleased with the involvement of our professional and student members throughout the ACA convention. We must take this time to thank ACA, our CSI Executive Council, our CSI Committee Leadership Team, CSI Headquarters, and each and every CSI members who makes our communal time together at the annual convention such a productive, enlightening, and simply….a real fun time for all!
Dr. Jennifer Carney:
2013 Outstanding CSI Chapter Faculty Advisor
by Kelly Smith, Sigma Phi Sigma Chapter, Argosy University-Washington D.C.

Sigma Phi Sigma Chapter at Argosy University in Washington has one mission, which is to help members achieve excellence in counseling through promoting research, scholarship, professionalism, and leadership. What makes an organization successful? A successful organization always begins with a successful organizer or leader. What are the qualities of a successful leader? An exceptional leader is one who strives for excellence in every circumstance. A successful leader must be passionate about their work, must maintain a high standard of excellence, and must foster an attitude of “team work” in order to be considered an excellent leader. Our chapter faculty advisor, Dr. Jennifer Maskell Carney, is an exceptional leader and the backbone of our organization.

Dr. Carney received her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Virginia. She has broad experience in college counseling, community mental health, and private practice in the Northern Virginia/Washington, DC area, which she brings to the students and faculty at Argosy University. Her major areas of interest include gender and women’s concerns, body image and eating disorders (such as food addictions, emotional overeating, excessive exercise, and self-esteem) for adolescents and adults, counselor professional identity, career counseling, and wellness-oriented approaches to assessment and the therapeutic process. In private practice, Dr. Carney utilizes a supportive, strengths-based therapeutic approach while incorporating cognitive and behavioral strategies to help the client achieve their counseling goals.

When inquiring about her involvement with CSI, I learned that Dr. Carney has a long history with the organization. She became a student member in 2002 while she was working on her masters’ degree at the University of Virginia. She then served as the chapter president as a doctoral student before coming to Argosy DC as an Assistant Professor in the spring of 2008. She has served as our chapter CFA for five years.

In addition to Dr. Carney’s involvement through membership and as the chapter faculty advisor, she was the recipient of the 2013 CSI Outstanding Chapter Faculty Advisor Award and was recognized at the 2013 ACA Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio in March. To recognize her excellent leadership on a local level, a reception was held in her honor for all CSI members and faculty on the Argosy DC campus (pictured on page 14).

When asked to describe her experience as chapter CFA, she stated that “It has been a

“Our chapter faculty advisor, Dr. Jennifer Maskell Carney, is an exceptional leader and the backbone of our organization.”
privilege to be in a position to motivate and inspire students to reach beyond their work in the classroom, to develop excellence, leadership and advocacy in the counseling profession.”

When asked to highlight our chapter’s accomplishments, Dr. Carney said that “Since becoming CFA of Sigma Phi Sigma, the following programs have been implemented: a formal membership process, an awards recognition program, an annual NCE workshop fundraiser, and a successful peer mentoring program that has been presented at ACA and published in the Exemplar.”

The culmination of her service was being recognized as the Outstanding Chapter Faculty Advisor by CSI International this year. Being active in CSI and seeing our chapter succeed was her original goal, however support for our chapter by receiving this recognition was unexpected and one of her proudest accomplishments.

When asked how she is able to promote excellence within her chapter Dr. Carney stated that “I feel it is so important to build personal mentoring relationships with students, and they, in turn, mentor and inspire each other. I have found that by cultivating strong student leadership, the chapter truly flourishes. These students are also then motivated to continue to be involved in CSI long after graduation.”

Dr. Carney identified her favorite CSI memory as the induction ceremonies. “These events are very meaningful for the numerous students, faculty and administration who attend. It is thrilling to see all of the outstanding, eager students, and their proud family members and friends who come to support them.” •
Dr. Judith Harrington:  
2013 Outstanding Practitioner  
by Alyse Anekstein, Phi Omicron Chi Chapter, Idaho State University  
and Andrea Faeth, Upsilon Nu Mu Chapter, University of New Mexico

Dr. Judith Harrington is a counselor educator as well as a private practice clinician who encompasses what it means to be a counselor, counselor educator, and advocate. She recently received the 2013 Chi Sigma Iota Outstanding Practitioner Award. Growing up in a rural region in Illinois, Dr. Harrington never imagined her professional life would be so gratifying and that she would be honored for her service in the counseling profession.

“...counseling has always seemed like an invitation, a type of duty or call, and a privilege.”

Dr. Harrington has been an asset to the counseling profession by teaching and educating counselors in training while continuing to work with a diverse clientele. In the course of all her professional endeavors, Dr. Harrington is still able to stay grounded in the values of Chi Sigma Iota and finds active membership in the Zeta Chapter, in addition to professional associations and divisions, an essential part of her accountability and her own self-care. As a practitioner, Dr. Harrington has co-authored many large national grant applications. This year Dr. Harrington, as a part of the Alabama Suicide Prevention and Resources Coalition and the State Department of Public Health, was awarded the $1,500,000 three year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Dr. Harrington truly embodies the values that we, as CSI members, try to encompass. She was nominated for the CSI Outstanding Practitioner Award by the UAB Zeta Chapter and has been a member of that chapter since 1994. Dr. Harrington chose to be a part of the nearest chapter geographically to create more opportunities for attendance and participation within the organization.

When asked about how she incorporates the values of CSI into her practice, she responded eloquently by saying that counseling has never felt like a job to her. She stated that counseling “has always seemed like an invitation, a type of duty or call, and a privilege.” Dr. Harrington has 34 years of experience in the counseling field and has not forgotten this honor and pride of being part of the counseling profession. She states that CSI is metaphorically like a North Star. She stated, “CSI as a North Star is always a reference point on our horizon... inspiring us with questions such as what could I do better or where is help needed or how could we improve?” Dr. Harrington is a
great example of how we, as practitioners and counselor educators, can use the values of Chi Sigma Iota in our everyday counseling practices. She is a counselor educator and a practitioner who exudes the values that we hold so close to our hearts as CSI members. After 34 years of experiences, she is still able to show us how we can keep the values of CSI aligned in our professional identity.

Dr. Harrington was asked how she balances Chi Sigma Iota into her professional identity and her reply was that “I try to practice humility, reminding myself of my mistakes or close calls, reminding myself that we all go home to chop wood and carry water, as the proverb states.” She stays grounded though peer consultation groups, ongoing education and professional membership. Dr. Harrington is still an active member of the Zeta Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota after almost 20 years of membership! We can only hope to learn from Dr. Harrington’s experience as a long-standing CSI member, counselor educator, and counselor.

Some advice that she gave to those who may want to follow in her footsteps of working as a practitioner with a diverse clientele was to 1) be open to a variety of experiences, 2) be willing to try a lot of things, 3) remember that being a counseling professional is an identity with no walls; take your credentials with you, proudly, 4) do one’s best to work in the setting or with the clients that provide inspiration, 5) define a mission statement for oneself…and go for it! •
The Alpha Sigma Chapter's American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Campus Walk was an idea generated by the students, completely organized by the students, and an outreach with great personal meaning for the students and the faculty at JMU. While the first year was considered in every way a success, with 83 registered participants and more than $4,300 raised, the second year began showing early signs that it would be a success beyond anyone's imagination.

"Community collaboration was central to reaching the target population as well as to providing the best support and resources possible."

The purpose of the Out of the Darkness Campus Walk is three-fold. The first goal is to raise money for the vital research and outreach efforts of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Second, the Walk provided an opportunity for CSI members to support members of the Shenandoah Valley community who are frequently marginalized and isolated due to their experiences with suicide grief. And third, the event itself allowed for students to provide information and education regarding mental health services, signs and risk factors for suicide, and activities that support resilience to help those at risk or who are bereaved.

Community collaboration was central to reaching the target population as well as to providing the best support and resources possible. During the first year of the Walk, promotion and collaboration occurred in partnership with the Central Valley Counselors Association, the James Madison University Counseling Program alumni, word of mouth, and flyers posted on campus. By 2012, that had expanded to advertising and personal communication with local survivors of suicide chapters, an ongoing relationship with walkers from the previous years, engagement with the JMU website as well as local media outlets, and a Facebook presence. Volunteers were recruited from Survivors of Suicide chapters in Harrisonburg, Charlottesville, and Staunton. More than a half dozen agencies provided resources and a physical presence during the event. These included: Rockingham Memorial Hospital, Lanterns of Hope Survivors of Suicide Support Group, SOS of Augusta County, the Center for Marriage and Family Counseling, the Center for Student Counseling and Development at JMU, and Bridgewater College Student Development Center.

Several students participated in specific training on facilitating discussions about suicide loss and how to properly discuss the issue and the event with the media. They attended state-wide events in order to understand how other organizations supported this population and also as a way to learn and promote our event. When April 22nd arrived, our Walk had 316 registered participants raising nearly four
times what was raised during the first year of the event. People traveled from as far away as Alabama and Maryland to participate. And the day of the event was absolutely freezing with a crazy non-stop downpour…and yet we had surprisingly few people decide not to show.

Honestly, the thing that struck many people through this entire process was the reverence the students held toward the cause and the people involved. Their commitment to excellence fueled their determination to make sure the quality of the event reflected the sincerity of their beliefs. At times it was overwhelming to imagine how to best accommodate a 400% growth and it forced everyone to streamline processes, develop stronger organizational systems, and really rally and support each other. This brought out a beautiful collaboration among the students and a genuinely empathic outreach.

We held our third Out of the Darkness walk on April 21, 2013. This one carried an additional weight as our JMU Department of Graduate Psychology had lost a beloved faculty member to suicide only a month earlier. CSI Alpha Sigma Chapter students were mindful of the timing and significance of this walk while also making sure that one loss did not eclipse the many other losses honored on that day.

Alpha Sigma Chapter organized the first Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Campus Walk at James Madison University. The walk was successful in raising awareness and monies to fund suicide prevention programs. Alpha Sigma chapter members also participated in additional training related to suicide prevention and intervention.

One “team” celebrates a life with the release of balloons!
This year we had more than 300 participants who walked together on a beautiful Shenandoah Valley Sunday and – at last count – raised over $13,300 to support the mission of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

It is difficult to fully capture the energy and the respect involved in the process. Those of us faculty who had an inside look and who were present on the day of the event were simultaneously profoundly moved by the impact of the event and beaming with pride over what our students had cultivated. This event really mattered…to the participants, to the community, and to our students.
The Mu Tau Beta chapter at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) has taken great strides this year to uphold and promote the ideals of Chi Sigma Iota; service, leadership and professional identity. The 2012 Master’s Counselor Development Conference (MCDC) was an example of an event created to assist UNCC students in developing these skills. We are pleased to share the details about the development of the conference while highlighting specific aspects of the program that focused on each of the ideals proposed by Chi Sigma Iota.

“The MCDC, Master’s students in training were able to begin to carve out their own professional identities and see others who have a strong sense of self at work.”

The 2012 Master’s Counselor Development Conference
Planning for the conference began in July 2012. The committee met regularly for six months to conceptualize and plan the vision for the conference. The idea itself came about the previous year, but it was up to the 2012-2013 Board to see it through. James McMullen, the Conference Chair and President-Elect, brought in a doctoral student from last year’s planning committee and a master’s counseling student to help develop this program. The goal of the conference was to provide an experience for Master’s students to further develop service, leadership, and professional identity through presenting their own research. The conference itself was held on a Friday from 9am-2pm. Attendance was made up of students, faculty and professionals in the field, totaling fifty participants. Modeled after many other professional conferences, there was a keynote speaker from within the UNCC Counseling Department, as well as space for poster sessions and educational sessions. Mu Tau Beta provided refreshments to accommodate the needs of our guests and as an enticement for attendance.

Service
The idea of service is weighted very heavily in the counseling field, which includes not only service to our clients, but also service to the profession. Mu Tau Beta embraced this concept by developing this conference. The chapter recognized the need for Master’s students to engage in service to the department and the advancement of counseling by presenting their own research. Additionally, as part of the conference program, the President and Past-President co-presented an educational session on how to become more active in professional organizations with an emphasis on service to Chi Sigma Iota and to our local chapter, Mu Tau Beta. Part of this presentation included
a description of the various projects that Mu Tau Beta has conducted during the year 2012-2013 to serve the Charlotte community; including, clothing drives for non-profit organizations and social advocacy projects. The goal of this presentation was to charge Master’s students with becoming more active in Mu Tau Beta and in serving the Charlotte community.

Leadership
As demonstrated by the ten Principles and Practices of Leadership Excellence (CSI Academy of Leaders for Excellence, 1999), Chi Sigma Iota highly values the development of leadership among professional counselors. Under the Philosophy of Leadership, the first principle states that service to others is the underlying motivation for leadership involvement. The MCDC utilized this principle by providing an opportunity for Master’s students to present on topics that advance the field of counseling. These students were able to engage in leadership by exemplifying the importance of service to each other and the community.

In accordance with the eighth principle, Mentoring, Encouragement, and Empowerment, leaders provide opportunities for members to use their unique skillsets to serve others and the counseling profession (CSI Academy of Leaders for Excellence, 1999). Upholding this principle was essential throughout the development of the MCDC. Thus, participating students had support from Mu Ta Beta members who have had previous experiences as presenters at national conferences as they prepared their proposals for presentations. Support was given during a pre-conference information session to answer any questions the participants might have had, and to highlight the proposal process. Submitted proposals were given feedback by the planning committee to give the participants a realistic view of how submissions would be received at professional counseling conferences.

Professional Identity
Developing a professional identity as a counselor whether the role is for a counselor educator, supervisor, or practitioner is pivotal to the advancement of the counseling profession. Counselors who lack a strong sense of professional identity will not be able to advocate for themselves or the profession. With the MCDC, Master’s students in training were able to begin to carve out their own professional identities and see others who have a strong sense of self at work. As part of the conference, two panels were invited to specifically discuss the meaning of professional identity. A panel of clinicians from schools, colleges, hospitals, agencies, and addiction treatment settings shared their experiences and answered students’ questions. Another panel of doctoral students (pictured on page 22) discussed reasons for selecting a PhD program in Counselor Education, the experience of a doctoral
program, and managing life and wellness. Throughout the day, students participated in discussions about the importance of counselor identity and professional engagement throughout one’s career. This discourse provided attendees with an opportunity to engage in self-reflection regarding their future identity within the counseling field.

Having practitioners from the community present at the conference allowed students to network. One comment from a first-year Master’s student who attended the conference, spoke of the impact this conference had in cultivating professional development: “After my presentation, I was approached by three agencies inviting me to present to their staff in the next few weeks. Wow, what great opportunities and networking relationships a conference like this opens you up to. Thank you to ALL the organizers for making things like this happen.” This demonstrates the impact that programs like MCDC can have on the professional development of counselors in training.

The Mu Tau Beta chapter of Chi Sigma Iota at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte was excited to offer this program for current Master’s counseling students. The connections made and the demonstrated growth was apparent in both personal and professional aspects. Thanks to the support from the faculty and the work of the committee charged with organizing the conference, this first time event was successful. •

“The connections made and the demonstrated growth was apparent in both personal and professional aspects.”
Advancing CSI’s Strategic Plan Through Professional Collaboration:
The Kentucky Counseling Association Experience
by Bill Braden, Shana Goggins, and Panagiotis Markopoulos, Epsilon Kappa Upsilon, Eastern Kentucky University (edited by Bradley McKibben, Exemplar Associate Student Editor)

Chi Sigma Iota’s mission is to “…promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership, advocacy and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling” (CSI, 2009). CSI accomplishes this mission through chapters that advance CSI’s strategic plan.

In Kentucky, the state counseling association has identified a need to better connect counselors-in-training to professional counselors, thus enhancing the counseling community in the state. The process by which this need was addressed allowed CSI members from several chapters to come together and to collaborate with the Kentucky Counseling Association (KCA) to devise and implement a plan to reach out to counselors-in-training.

In an effort to strengthen services to students, the KCA formed a graduate student task force. The purpose of the task force was to enhance professional and leadership development for graduate students in counselor education programs in Kentucky. Students selected to serve on that task force either had served as volunteers with KCA or had served in a leadership capacity in their counselor education program of study. The KCA sought students who demonstrated passion and dedication to the field of professional counseling, as well as involvement and participation in scholarly activities within their CSI chapters. Accordingly, all students selected to the task force were active CSI members. The task force, coordinated by Dr. Kerry Sebera of the Nu Kappa chapter, consisted of the following: Amanda Burd (Alpha Phi Sigma), Shana Goggins (Epsilon Kappa Upsilon), and Panagiotis Markopulos (Epsilon Kappa Upsilon).

Task force members began by drafting an action plan that would meet the charge given them and by presenting the plan to the KCA executive committee. Members also devised a system for delivery of relevant and timely services to counselors-in-training. To ensure that the plan was relevant to the needs of the target population, members designed and administered a survey to explore potentially

A poster presentation located outside the Student Lounge at KCA.
important topics such as professional identity
development (as it pertained to counselors-in-
training), collaboration, advocacy, leadership,
professional involvement preferences,
networking forums for students, and resource
materials. The survey allowed the task force
to create a customized outreach plan for
counselors-in-training.

Based on feedback from the survey, task
force members designed and staffed a
Student Lounge event at the KCA Annual
Conference. One objective was to provide
educational materials specific to the needs of
counselors-in-training. For example, available
materials included: KCA Graduate Student
Survey, CSI membership information, career
counseling and development materials, list
of skills sought by employers, information
on how to develop a personal marketing
statement, selected interview questions for
counselors, job search skills checklist, cover
letter writing packet, values assessment and
impact on career choice, handouts on how
to evaluate career options and appropriately
request references, NBCC Foundation
Scholarship information, CACREP New
Research Fellows Program for students,
counseling and supervision doctoral program
information, KCA membership and student
scholarship information, NBCC certification
information, Kentucky counseling licensure
requirements, and mentoring services
available via ACA and KCA.

A second objective was to provide an avenue
for interaction between counselors-in-
training and KCA executive board members
and professional counselors. In addition
to the opportunity to talk with professional
counselors, students participated in mock
interviews and received feedback on
interviewing and resume building. Many KCA
officers assisted in role plays by serving as
potential employers, and knowledge and
experience was shared with counselors-in-
training.

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As a result of the efforts of the task force up to and during the KCA conference, student conference participation was the highest to date. The increase in student participation boosted the overall total conference attendance by 50% compared to the previous year. The objective to focus on providing relevant and appropriate services for counselors-in-training was exceedingly met. As a result, KCA officers approved additional measures designed to increase online services for graduate students. Online services will be based upon the materials and resources gathered by the task force via the aforementioned survey. Following the success of the task force, KCA plans to continue to support activities that will attract and increase student participation.

The actions of students on the KCA graduate student task force hold several implications for CSI. First, the actions reflect a clear effort to advance CSI’s mission via its strategic plan. Specifically, the task force fostered collaboration among counselors and counselors-in-training and provided avenues for leadership development. Members also made it possible for counselors-in-training to engage in mentorship with experienced professional counselors.

The actions detailed here highlight the multitude of opportunities for CSI chapter leaders, committees, and members to collaborate with state counseling associations to foster professional development among counselors-in-training. Chapter faculty advisors can be involved in many ways too. In addition to encouraging and supporting collaborative efforts among chapters and counseling organizations, CFAs can serve as liaisons as chapters reach out to counseling organizations.

In sum, CSI chapters can serve a vital role in fostering student professional development by collaborating with local and state counseling associations. As demonstrated by CSI members on the KCA graduate student task force, opportunities are endless and easily adaptable to the needs of students. •
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