



WSCA Updates

For current happenings on the **2015 WSCA Annual Conference** as the planning progresses check out our wscaweb.org

ETHICS

WSCA has created an ethics committee to align our standards with ASCA! If you'd be interested in joining the committee, please contact Stacy Eslick, Executive Director, at stacye@wscaweb.org.

Here is the great news: WSCA offers a **FREE** student membership for first-year graduate students in school counseling programs here in Wisconsin! After that, each year's membership costs only \$25.00!

Comings and Goings

- The WSCA Graduate Student Committee Meeting will be held on November 22, 2012 at Lakeland College in Madison from 10:00am-12:00pm. Greg Curtis from DPI will be talking about licensure process for school counselors from m10-11.
 - Check with your school's WSCA Graduate Student Representative for more information! You may attend virtually via Google Skype!
- Don't forget to register for the 2016 WSCA Conference, February 16-18
 - Volunteer 4 hours at the conference for waived registration fee
 - Contact Katie Nechodom at nechodomk@gmail.com to sign up

A Message From the WSCA Grad Student Representatives

Fellow graduate students,

It's hard to believe another year is under way! The WSCA graduate student committee has been hard at work preparing for the WSCA conference and developing ways to get more graduate students involved in WSCA!

This year, it is our goal to bring school counseling graduate students from the *kid's table to the adult's table*. As corny as that sounds, we truly believe that getting graduate students involved in WSCA and other leadership roles, we can build connections with other professionals and truly begin to get immersed in the counseling profession.

Continuing from last year, is the Education Corner portion of our graduate student committee meetings. For the first hour of our meetings, we will have a guest speaker talk about something that is important in the school counseling field. The goal is to help make graduate students more aware of major topics to help prepare us for the professional world. Our November meeting will include Greg Curtis and the licensure process. If there are any topics that you'd be interested in learning more about, please let me know!

Getting Involved

Aside from attending our committee meetings, there are many ways to get involved with WSCA. One way is to volunteer at the WSCA Conference February 16-18. If you volunteer 4 hours of your time, your registration fee for conference is waived. If you plan to present a graduate student poster at the conference (more information below), WSCA will count 1 hour of that towards your volunteer hours,

meaning you will only need to volunteer 3 hours! Sign-up sheets for Registration booth, T-shirt booth, and shuttles will be emailed to those who are interested. Please email Katie Nechodom at nechodomk@gmail.com to sign-up.

Also check out www.wscaweb.org for more details about Conference and Pre-Conference. Pre-Conference offers a great opportunity for a FREE sectional called Day on the Hill. This is a great opportunity to learn how to speak with legislators, and then take part in meetings with ACTUAL legislators to promote School Counselors importance in schools.

In addition to the graduate student committee, WSCA has many committees for you to get involved in! Contact Katie Nechodom for more information.

Lastly, I wanted to just take a moment to say how excited Sara and I are to work with you all this year. We want to provide you with the best possible experience and knowledge that can. The only way we can do that is with your help, your ideas, your concerns, and your input. So we encourage you to provide us with feedback and contact us with any ideas you may have. We want to really make this group better than before, more professional, more fun, and more beneficial for all of us.. In a way, we are on this educational journey together. We only get to be Graduate Students for so long, so let us make the most of it.

Katie Nechodom
WSCA Graduate Student Co-Coordinator

Multiculturalism in School Counseling

By: Mardi Peeters – UW Oshkosh

In all counseling relationships, an understanding of multiculturalism is advantageous to both the counselor and the client. Sometimes this means giving voice to the elephant in the room. The most aware and multicultural counselors give precedence to addressing the elephant: race, ethnicity, and culture, while establishing a relationship built on trust and honesty. Some argue that this culture-specific awareness does not need to be brought up in the session; however, it is necessary to show clients that you respect their culture by working with them as a unique being without labels. In order to become a skilled multicultural counselor, one must be willing to learn about different cultures while keeping in mind their own cultural background and what makes them unique as a counselor. Additionally, a multicultural counselor should be empathetic in showing compassion to all clients in a nonjudgmental manner. Counselors who are mindful of multiculturalism can use these skills to address the barriers that one might face throughout their career in relation to those who differ. An ethnically aware counselor must not be blind to cultural variances as a way to ignore the differences throughout the world. Instead, they can continue their education to allow clients to feel confident in being his or her authentic self. Counselors who stand up and recognize the elephant in the room are able to accept all walks of life and provide a trusting environment to those who seek it.



Academic and Career Plans...another acronym!

By: Katie Nechodom – UW Oshkosh

This year at my internship site, I have been given the opportunity to lead our school in their Academic and Career Plan initiative. Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, DPI is requiring all public Wisconsin Schools to have an Academic and Career Plan for every student grades 6-12. I have developed an ACP Leadership Team that includes: my principal, high school counselors, Direct of Pupil Services, middle school counselor, teachers, parents, and students. DPI has developed 5 rubrics that each school can use to help implement ACPs which allow schools to evaluate their infrastructure as well as KNOW, EXPLORE, PLAN, and GO. Do students know about future careers? Are they exploring different opportunities? Do they have a plan for high school and post high school? Are they implementing this plan?

DPI has selected 25 pilot schools for this academic year to begin the implementation process. Schools are encouraged to begin this process and follow the lead of DPI and the pilot schools. Check out <http://dpi.wi.gov/acp> for more information!

Grad Student Poster Presentations at WSCA Conference

By: Katie Nechodom – UW Oshkosh

An incredible way to get involved in WSCA is to present at graduate student poster at the conference. All applications are due January 15th, 2016. Please email Katie Nechodom at nechodomk@gmail.com for a submission form or check with your school representative!

Why do a poster presentation?

- Great opportunity to network
- Contributes to volunteer hours required to waive registration fees
- Looks great on a resume
- You become the expert on your topic
- You get to highlight and show off your hard work to interested professionals

What kinds of projects can I present?

- Creative class projects
- Original compilations of resources or information
- Collaborative or independent research
- Curriculum design
- Hot topics in counseling
- Other ideas that might appeal to the profession of school counseling or graduate students

Professional posters use the following guidelines:

- Include your title, author(s), a selected references section (your most important 2-3 references), and graphics - pictures, diagrams, figures, tables, etc. - these are usually more eye-catching and understandable than text
 - Condense! You cannot possibly present everything you know on the topic in that small space!!
 - Include only your important points, and use bullets rather than a paragraph format; complete sentences are not required
 - The most common error is including too much information - RESIST!!
 - Use larger section headings to help the casual reader quickly understand the poster's organization (e.g., Education, Treatment)
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Grad School and the Real World (I should have paid better attention in school)

This fall was supposed to be my practicum - 125 hours of observing and learning from an experienced school counselor. In a strange and seemingly serendipitous turn of events, this practicum morphed itself into a full time counseling position at an elementary school in a small town about 45 minutes from Madison. Although I'm only a month and a half into my first counseling job, I've quickly realized that are certain parts of being a school counselor that graduate school can't adequately prepare us for, despite our schools' best efforts.

1. Advocating for your students can be hard! (Do it anyway.)

We all know that advocacy is expected of us under ASCA's definition of the roles of a counselor. What I was unprepared for is how hard it can be to truly advocate for our kiddos. Our students often can't advocate for themselves and they may not have parents that can or will advocate for them either. Standing up to administration and teachers is scary, especially as a student myself, but I haven't regretted it yet!

2. Ethics dilemmas are real, and much harder to deal with than they are in the books

Teachers may want to know what students shared with you, and you can't blame them when they're the ones with the student for the entire day. It's important to remember, no matter how much pressure we may face, that confidentiality belongs to our students, and it's their decision as to whether or not their stories are heard by the teachers, or anyone else for that matter.

3. Little kids can have BIG problems

While a piece of me knew that this was true, I was emotionally unprepared for how much it would hurt to see such young children facing such adult problems. The school that I work at is a difficult school. There is a lot of poverty, which affects the students and their families in profound ways. Abuse and neglect are too common, and I find that many of my students have leadership roles in their homes, even though they are seemingly too young to have such heavy responsibilities. While I can't always fix the issues they're experiencing at home, my job is to work with the teachers, administration and other staff to help ensure that they have a safe place to go for 7+ hours each day, where they feel deeply cared for by the adults in the building. My heart breaks a little more every day, but I know that in working with these kiddos, I'm fighting the good fight.

~ Graduate Schools with WSCA Student Chapters ~

Concordia University, Lakeland College, Marquette University, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Mount Mary University, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, University of Wisconsin-Stout, University of Wisconsin-Superior, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Winona State University.
