



# Counseling Connections

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## Honoring Endings to Prepare for Beginnings

Congratulations to all of us for making it through another semester! First-year students, I hope this semester has opened your eyes to your strengths and established within each of you a sense of competency in graduate school. To the graduates, cheers to you and all that you have accomplished. I wish you all the best in your counseling and life endeavors.

We're all coming to one end or another, while simultaneously preparing to embark on something new. It's easy to overlook, or just power through our endings, especially during this time of the year when everyone seems to be busy and stressed. However, in overlooking endings we run the risk of devaluing our experiences and all that has come from them.

While I'm excited to be done with this semester, I'm also sad to see it go. I don't want to move away from this trying semester without honoring it, but I know that once I finish my last



assignment, I will feel pulled in the direction of holiday preparations. So knowing this, I plan to intentionally honor this semester through reflection and celebration with my peers, before I jump headfirst into holiday mode.

This year has been difficult for me at times, especially this semester, but in looking back on it, I see that so much growth has occurred from the struggle and discomfort. Recognizing progress in myself that grew out of experiences I considered 'undesirable' at the time, has elucidated meaning that is often elusive in my daily life. This ending has given me direction and a firm foundation on which to build my new beginnings.

What do you celebrate in your current endings and what do you wish for your upcoming beginnings?

V. Mattei

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## Important Spring 2013 Dates



### January

**Monday, January 14:** Classes start

**Friday, January 18:** National Counselor Exam (NCE) applications due to Dr. Valerie Schwiebert with \$295 money order. If you have questions about the NCE, email Dr. Schwiebert  
vschwieb@email.wcu.edu

### February

**Friday, February 8:** Last day to apply for May 2013 graduation (apply now!)

### March

**Friday, March 1:** Group Interview; Applications for Fall 2013 practicum /internship are due

**Saturday, March 16:** Comprehensive examination (comps)

**Monday, March 25 to Friday, March 29:** WCU Spring Break

### April

**Saturday, April 20:** NCE

### May

**Thursday, May 9:** Coming Full Circle

## Gender Conference Presentation Opportunity



**What:** 12th Annual Gender Research Conference. This year's theme is Women and Ethnicity.

**When:** March 6, 2013, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Where:** AK Hinds University Center, WCU

**Keynote Speaker:** Crystal Leigh Endsley, Ph.D. Artist and scholar, Dr. Endsley is currently a visiting Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Hamilton College.

**Sponsors:** Western Carolina University's Women's

Studies Program, CEAP Diversity Committee and Phi Kappa Phi.

**Submissions:** Submit your gender research paper or poster to Dr. Marilyn Chamberlin, Director of Women's Studies, by January 13, 2013.

mchamber@wcu.edu

\*Information and the submission form can be found at [www.wcu.edu/31537.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/31537.asp)



"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."  
— Mother Teresa



## Financial Assistance and GSA Opportunities

### Travel Grants

For those grad students who are interested in professional development opportunities such as attending conferences, travel grants of up to \$200 per student are available. Travel grants are funded by the Graduate Student Association. For guidelines and application go to [www.wcu.edu/30532.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/30532.asp)

### Graduate Student Research and Creative Projects Stipend

An award of \$1,000 will be given to 20 graduate students for the Spring 2013 semester. The project includes 50 hours of work over the semester and must be in each student's area of study. Additionally, each student is required to be supported/mentored by a graduate

faculty member. Application deadline is Monday, January 21, 2013. For more information go to [www.wcu.edu/31647.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/31647.asp)

### Graduate Student Association

The GSA is looking for a student to head a branch of the GSA in Asheville. Also, in the spring there will be positions available on the GSA Board of Directors in Cullowhee. If interested contact GSA President Sarah Alspaw at [slalspaw@wcu.edu](mailto:slalspaw@wcu.edu)

## NCSCA Conference Student Presentations

### Session:

*Girls Group Activities Using Current Pop Music,*  
Lisen Roberts and Jennifer Full

### Graduate Student Poster Presentations:

*The Importance of Outcome Based Research in School Counseling,*

Paige Brooks, Stacy Macke, Kim Metcalf, and Jim Taylor

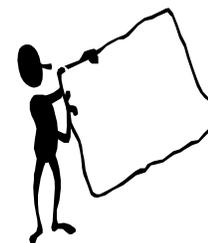
*Classroom Management Strategies For New School Counselors,*  
Tommy Cox

*Prescription Drug (Ab)use in Rural North Carolina,*  
Sarah Keister

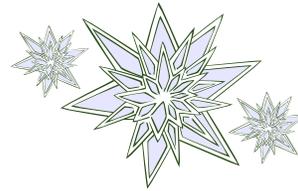
\*Sarah's poster won 2nd place of about 50 posters!

*Understanding RTI and the Roles of School Counselors,*  
Hanna Woody

*Trauma and Terror in Schools,*  
Catherine Cottam



# Congratulations Sarah!



When I first started searching for CACREP programs in School Counseling, I noticed how Appalachian State University had webpages for "Professional School Counselor" student awards, international

opportunities, and graduation class pictures. I wanted to be a part of something cool like that. Since that time, sure, my plans and priorities have shifted. I now am committed to more qualitative goals of becoming a better partner, daughter, sister, friend, survivor and citizen in addition to becoming a counselor extraordinaire. To those ends, I'm glad I found our excellent program and people at Western Carolina University. I'm grateful Dr. Lisen Roberts motivated me to go because seeing first years, second years, a third year, and two superheroine faculty members at the NCSCA conference in Greensboro was inspirational. We gave our time and energies to represent the program advocating for important issues.

It helped my practice come to life to apply resources I'd picked up in Addictions Counseling with Dr. Valerie Schwiebert, and with the help of Dr. Ellen Sigler in Methods of Research. It was powerful to hear real students', practitioners', and board members' reactions and experiences in Prescription Drug (Ab)use across North Carolina. In sum, I was proud to tell people I was from WCU... and when it all was said and done, I thought it was ironic I edged out ASU for second place award.

Sarah Keister  
Prospective School Counselor, M.A.Ed. '13

## More Conference Reflections

### Hanna Woody

I enrolled in an education elective this summer to learn about an academic intervention process for struggling learners called Response to Intervention (RTI). The final project of this course was to design a professional development series to help other school counselors understand RTI and their roles as possible leaders in this process. I used my research and professional presentation to develop an informational poster for the NCSCA Conference and included a skills assessment for school counselors. The RTI process is geared towards academic intervention, but school counselors can play a dynamic and appropriate leadership role to make the process more successful. It was a great experience presenting the material. I made several professional contacts which will be very helpful to me as North Carolina unrolls this new tiered problem solving method in schools.

### Jim Taylor

Participating in the NCSCA conference was quite a rewarding experience. Phyllis asked our program development class if anyone would be interested in presenting at the conference. My interest was immediately piqued as I decided this would be the perfect opportunity to further my professional development and collaborate with my peers. The poster session required we work under pressure, and I realized just how much I knew about the topic after researching it. Working with my peers proved to be enjoyable and thought provoking. I look forward to opportunities like this in the future.

### Stacy Macke

My first experience presenting a poster at a conference was interesting. I enjoyed researching my topic and creating the poster with my peers. The actual presentation was not what I thought it would be. I thought there would be more professionals asking me about the research and outcomes from that research. Most of the people just came by and made small talk about the poster. I feel

that being involved as a graduate student at conferences is a must to increase my professionalism and knowledge, so I will definitely participate in a poster session at other conferences.

### Jennifer Full

In my personal goal statement submitted in 2010, I wrote "My ultimate goal as a school counselor is to provide research that will impact the field of counseling..." It seems so long ago, but like yesterday at the same time. Co-presenting with Lisen at the conference is a small testament of the dedication this program has to contribute to the goals of students. With this experience, I am now even more determined to reach my personal goals along with a new awareness of the importance of research to the counseling community. It was both an empowering and humbling opportunity to represent the program by helping provide information to others. I'm so very grateful.

### Tommy Cox

I came into this program with a degree in marketing and very little teaching experience. So when I decided to do my practicum at an elementary school that facilitated three hours of classroom guidance every morning, I was a little more than scared. So I observed my site supervisor, other teachers, read books and articles on classroom management, and practiced, because I was in dire need of help. Then when Lisen suggested doing a poster presentation for the NCSCA conference, classroom management was all that was on my mind. So, my topic and poster were born.

In regards to the experience at NCSCA, it was incredibly valuable. I met counseling students from all over the state, and found many similarities and differences between us. The topics students presented on were incredibly interesting and each student was eager to share their research and hard work. It also felt good to have someone interested in my work and want to talk to me about it. All in all, it was a fun experience that I hope I have an opportunity to do again one day.

# Congratulations to our December 2012 Counseling Graduates!!!



L. Beagle, CMHC

Laurie Kozar, CMHC

Shannon Coney, CMHC

Jennifer Laite, SC

Chris Farmer, CMHC

Kristin Manning, CMHC

Rachel Henry, CMHC

Mehgan McNeil, CMHC

Tommy Jameson, CMHC

Liz Olds, CMHC

Molly Johnson, CMHC

Matthew Peterson, CMHC

Dan Keith, CMHC

Autumn Rumpfelt, SC

Matt Kirby, SC

Megan Simpson, CMHC

Note from the editor:

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue of *Counseling Connections*, and thank you to the readers. May you have a safe, and happy holiday season. See you in 2013!

Sincerely,

Vicki Mattei



*Happy Holidays!*