



Summer 2016

Graduate Student Newsletter

WSCA Updates

Check out wscaweb.org for information about membership, events, advocacy, scholarships, and other important information and resources!

Summer Leadership Academy Cultural Competencies
July 26th, 9-4
CESA 1 (Pewaukee)

Fall Summit Mental Health in Schools
October 21, 9-4
CESA 4 (West Salem)

WSCA Conference
February 21-23, 2017

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!

To the 2015-2016 Graduate Student Committee,

We would like to send an enormous 'Thank you' to all the representatives and regional co-chairs for your fantastic work on the committee this year. Being involved in a professional organization while in graduate school is no easy feat. You successfully managed your responsibilities on top of balancing all the demands of graduate school and responsibilities in your life. For your dedication, we will be forever grateful! It has been an honor getting to know each and every one of you! We have no doubt that you are going to be amazing school counselors ready to make positive changes in the lives of everyone you meet. Best wishes in your future endeavors!

*~Katie Nechodom, UW-Oshkosh & Sara Rollin, Lakeland
2015-2016 Graduate Student Co-Coordinators*

Me...? A Professional School Counselor?!!

By: Sarah Tennie, UW-Oshkosh

As I sit here, some twenty days from graduation, I am struck with memories of my time in graduate school. When I began my program 3 years ago, it seemed like the next three years of my life would drag on. What I did not know is that those three years would be the most important time in my life for a variety of reasons. When I entered my program I was in a whirlwind of transitions. I had just thrown my "plan" for my life out the window, accepted a position at UW Oshkosh, moved in with my partner, and started grad school. I look back on that time and wonder how I did it, but thankfully, I do not remember much of it.

As I prepare to enter the "real world" I am overcome with feelings of self-doubt and I continue to wonder if I am truly ready to be a School Counselor. It is as if all of the growth I have done over the past few years has fallen by the weigh side. I have to catch myself from those thoughts of doubt because I am exactly where I need to be and I need to trust in the experiences that have brought me to where I am now.

When I was thinking about transitioning from student to professional, I was struck with a thought. Maybe I have been a professional all along. Maybe I have always had the knowledge and skills, they just needed to be fine-tuned and I needed to have more confidence in that. Maybe this is the "plan" that was supposed to happen and all of the experiences I have had up until this point have slowly been shoving me into my role as a professional. I think that we will all struggle with that concept of, "will I be good enough?" or "do I actually have the knowledge and skills to do this job?"

Continue to trust in your experiences and give yourself a break! The first year in the "real world" is supposed to challenge us and it will be a hard year. But, there is a silver lining! We are not alone. We do not have to know everything right away, we are lifelong learners after all ☺ Transitions are full of stress and doubt, as much as you can, lean into that but do not let it consume you. Reach out to those around you for support and recognize that you will be learning for the rest of your career (please know I am saying these things to myself as I type this). Congratulations to my fellow graduates- see you on the other side ☺

A Day on the Hill

By: Desirae Schroeder, Mount Mary University

During my undergraduate career, I enrolled in a Field Psychology course where I was able to get experience in a school setting, similar to that of internship experience through my graduate program but less formal or intensive. Prior to enrolling in this course I had no experience in a school setting and did not have much knowledge surrounding the field of school counseling, other than the general description of the occupation. Also, prior to beginning the course, I did not have much knowledge of advocacy and the politics that are intertwined in the profession. It was through the Field Psychology course that I was able to select an advocacy topic in my field of interest, which was school counseling. Because I had been passionate about my future career as a School Counselor, I decided to advocate for the profession. At the time I was taking the undergraduate course and selecting an advocacy topic, I heard about possible changes in legislation regarding the requirements for School Counselors; however, from the research that I conducted at the time, and my awareness of the mental health status of children and adolescents in our state, I knew that legislation should in fact be going the opposite direction. The specific advocacy topic that I chose to present was that not only should School Counselors be required in schools, but an increase in the number of School Counselors should be required across all districts. Towards the end of this advocacy project I was able to have the experience to write legislators in

the state of Wisconsin. Upon writing several legislators, I heard back from a few of them about my advocacy topic, which was a neat experience.

In the current state of legislation, School Counselors still need to continue to advocate for the profession because our positions may be in jeopardy. Legislators, elected officials, and others in high level positions are able to decide the fate of School Counselors, which not only affects our job outlook, but more importantly it affects the mental health of the children and adolescents that we help. Through this experience I also realized how important data and documentation is to support the work that we do every day. There is value in sharing information and facts with policy makers, as these are the folks that make the big decisions that trickle down to those of lower positions. Despite the lack of change that I saw on behalf of the letters I wrote, I am only one of thousands of counselors in Wisconsin that share the same passion and profession. I encourage you, fellow School Counselors, to speak up and spread the importance of advocating because it is one of our vital responsibilities as professionals in the field of mental health. WSCA Day on the Hill is an avenue for Wisconsin School Counselors to join together and continue to advocate for the lives of children and adolescents that we impact every day.

Ethics In School Counseling

By: Mardi Peeters, UW-Oshkosh

As a school counseling student, I've learned just how important the topic of ethics is to the school counseling profession. I have read the ASCA Code of Ethics and have listened to my professors speak about how essential it is to abide by and believe in each standard. This past weekend, I had the privilege of attending the last WSCA graduate student committee meeting of the year at the beautiful Mount Mary University in Milwaukee. Dr. Carrie King, who is a professor at the university, was gracious enough to share her wealth of knowledge on ethics and Wisconsin laws specifically surrounding sexual consent of minors. She spoke about the legal aspects of our profession and made me realize just how complex ethics can be. Those attending the meeting were given much information about how to report cases of sexual abuse or coercion.

Given this sensitive topic, I felt confident because I know that it is best practice to report on good faith to minimize negative consequences.

It is with professional judgment that we can make a decision if a report should be made. While this judgment becomes stronger based on the amount of experience in the field, it seems to come back to having a good sense of what your own value system is. A school counselor is in best practice if they do not take action based on their own set of values, but rather if they take a step back and act upon what is in the best interest of the student. We must know the law so that we can act ethically. After this meeting, I researched the Wisconsin State Legislature website to read about Ch. 48 Children's Code. I recognized that knowing the Code of Ethics and Wisconsin's laws is an important task that I must take seriously so that I can act appropriately for each situation and be the ethically responsible and trusting school counselor that I know I can be.

Nurtured Heart Approach

By: Ruth Greiber

When I decided to become a school counselor I was clear on one thing: if I can give students life skills and self-esteem, then I have given them a large part of what they need to succeed both in and out of school. That was the easy part. It was more difficult to find the same clarity on *how* to go about giving that to each and every student I work with. That's why when I went to the annual WSCA convention in 2014 and heard Tammy Holtan-Arnol, a school counselor in the Verona Area School District, speak about the Nurtured Heart Approach®, I knew I had to have more. At the time, I was a fifth grade teacher in the Oregon School District and I began implementing bits and pieces of the approach with students in my classroom and also led a book study of Howard Glasser's book "Notching Up the Nurtured Heart Approach" with a small group of teaching colleagues. Immediately, I noticed improvement in the climate of my classroom, the positive behaviors of my students, and my own enjoyment of teaching. Since that first training, I have attended several more and have been lucky enough to become a certified trainer of the approach.

The Nurtured Heart Approach® is based on The 3 Stands™: Stand #1: Absolutely No! I will not energize negative behavior. Stand #2: Absolutely Yes! I will relentlessly energize positive behavior. Stand#3: Absolute Clarity: I will provide complete clarity regarding rules which have fair and consistent boundaries and consequences.

These three stands empower adults to redirect the way that they energize children (and other adults) in their lives. Rather than rewarding negative choices and behaviors with the gift of their relationship, they save the good stuff for positive choices and behaviors. I know this sounds like something you have heard before, but trust me, it isn't. The approach teaches adults how to make the most of any moment, and instead of making mountains out of molehills, we can begin creating miracles from molecules. When you stop to think about ways in which we give our energy and relationship to students, chances are that most of the time it is around a negative behavior or choice. This is confusing to students, as they (most likely on a subconscious level) receive the message that the way to get the best out of us, meaning the biggest reaction, energy and relationship, is by making negative choices. Howard Glasser refers to this as "upside down" energy. Rather than waiting for something to go wrong in order to give a big reaction, why not consistently energize and recognize students for what is going great in any moment?

This is confusing to students, as they (most likely on a subconscious level) receive the message that the way to get the best out of us, meaning the biggest reaction, energy and relationship, is by making negative choices. Howard Glasser refers to this as "upside down" energy. Rather than waiting for something to go wrong in order to give a big reaction, why not consistently energize and recognize students for what is going great in any moment? Lecture students on how much respect they are showing when they wait in line patiently rather than lecturing them on how little respect they are showing when they push and shove a classmate in line. When do you think the student is more likely to be listening and absorb what you are saying?

This approach has made my work with students meaningful on a deeper level than ever before. I can recognize them for their greatness in any moment. A student may come to meet with me in a one on one setting and tell me how much he wishes he didn't have to be there. I can then tell him that in that moment I see that he is feeling upset about having to come to my office and yet he is there. That shows his respect and responsibility. Rather than coming in and not saying anything or yelling and throwing things, he had the courage to be honest and tell me what he was feeling. The Nurtured Heart Approach has changed the way I see things, and guess what? I can see and name the great things about any student, and that has led to my own greatness revolution. I save myself for the greatness I see and create everywhere. The students I work with have begun to do the same thing and I am seeing transformations in the way that they carry themselves and interact with the world around them. They have improved self-esteem and life skills. They are in the midst of transformation.

"Don't be fooled by the name of the approach," Howard Glasser informed a room full of trainees in Madison at the beginning of April, "It is a warrior approach." This approach is not for the weak. It will provide you with a tool to get through to even your most difficult students, but you have to make the commitment.

I dare you to give it a try. How long can you go without feeding negativity with your energy? I bet that once you enter the greatness revolution, you won't want to stop. And if that's the case, then you can find more resources and information on the Children's Success Foundation's website: <http://www.childrensuccessfoundation.com/>. And please feel free to contact me for area trainings and opportunities: rag3@oregonsd.net.

To your greatness!