



Grad. Student Newsletter Winter 2015/16

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 January 31, 2016 from 10-12. Campus is still being determined.
 - 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

Professional Development for Students

By: Sara Rollin

As we all know, school counseling is a constantly evolving field. These changes come for many reasons: new information on what will benefit students the most, different trends and fads in the field, development of new resources, budgetary changes, etc.

Even in my two years as a graduate student, we've seen the introduction of ACP's as well as an increasing emphasis on mental health in the schools. As graduate students, we're constantly inundated with new information and ideas to help us become effective school counselors from our schools, our practicum and internship sites, our classmates, and more. How can we be expected to keep up with our classroom education as well as learn current trends in the field that aren't a part of our traditional educational experience?

Obviously, WSCA is a great way to learn about current trends and the first-year free membership for graduate students exists in part to show us the importance of WSCA and membership in a professional organization. WSCA has incredibly active Facebook and Twitter pages which provide information on upcoming professional development opportunities, as well as

articles on trends in the field. They also host Twitter chats (the next one will be held December 17th at 7 p.m.!) where professionals from around the state (and country) discuss trends in their areas. WSCA also provides great professional development opportunities such as the upcoming conference in February, which we would strongly encourage all of you to attend!

While life as a graduate student is crazy at times, it surely won't slow down much once we're working in the field. It is important for us to start our professional development now, and to keep it going throughout our careers.

What I learned from my semester in Elementary School

By: Sarah Tennie– UW Oshkosh

I started off this semester being incredibly nervous about my elementary school placement. I had limited experience with younger kids and I had built up in my head that they were scary and that I would be no good with them. Because of this I overthought everything I was doing at my placement. If I was going to be working with a student I wanted to have multiple activities planned out so that we could make the most of our time. What I came to find out (relatively quickly) was that kids do not need activities.

Are activities fun and beneficial to student learning and engagement? – Absolutely! But what I learned was that it is just important to be there with them. What the kids needed from me was for me to be genuine and build a relationship. Once that happened, the rest fell into place. I still use activities, do not get me wrong, but they serve a different purpose now. I go into my individual session with my kiddos knowing that whatever must get accomplished in our short amount of time together will get accomplished and that I cannot try and control fate.

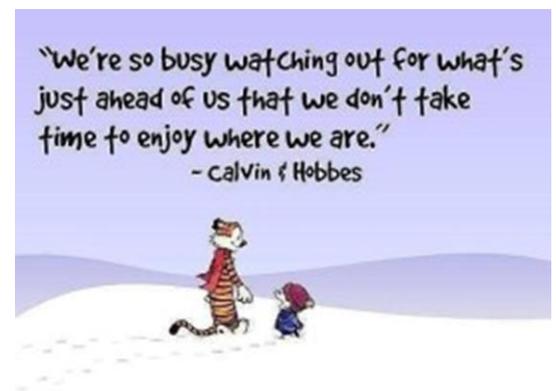
Kids come into schools with a whole host of things weighing on them. They may come from homes where they receive very little food, no supervision, and little to no love. They get excited knowing that when they come to school, they are safe and cared for. If our students' basic needs are not being met, how can we expect them to learn? I have found that even 15-20 minutes a week with a student can change their whole world and the way they look at themselves. Not to mention, the way they look at school. One of the students I am working with struggled with attendance last year. This year he looks forward to our weekly get-togethers and has not had an attendance issue. Do I think that was completely solved by his relationship with me? - probably not, but I think it is certainly a start in the right direction.

What our students need from us as counselors is for us to show up, every day. Kids are incredibly intuitive and they know when we are not being genuine. We all entered this field for a reason, because we care and want to help. When we show our students that, we can accomplish incredible things. You are enough for our students. All you have to do is show up and be you.

Mindfulness

By: Jessika White – Marquette

Last year West Milwaukee Intermediate School, where I am currently interning, implemented Mindfulness into its curriculum. This involved training all faculty and staff in mindful practices, as well as classroom guidance lessons by the school counselors on what mindfulness is and how different mindful activities are beneficial to students. Many teachers now begin each class with a mindful moment, which involves the students getting in a mindful position and taking deep breaths, which are prompted by a certain tool. This instrument can be the expanding and compressing of a Hoberman Sphere, the ringing of a chime, or watching glitter settle in a "Mind Jar". The impact in the school in just a year is clearly evident, and the culture has shifted to one that values the importance of taking a moment and being aware of the present. In a few years all of West Allis West Milwaukee will have implemented Mindfulness into its program. It will be exciting to see the effect this has on an entire district, and eventually city.



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)
 - Make your poster visually attractive
 - Color is a plus, up to a limit (don't blind your audience)
 - Use PowerPoint or another computer program to create the poster – no handwriting. Make your poster readable from 5 feet away (at least 20-point font for the text and at least 75-point font for the title).
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Self-Care, It's Still and Will Always Be Important

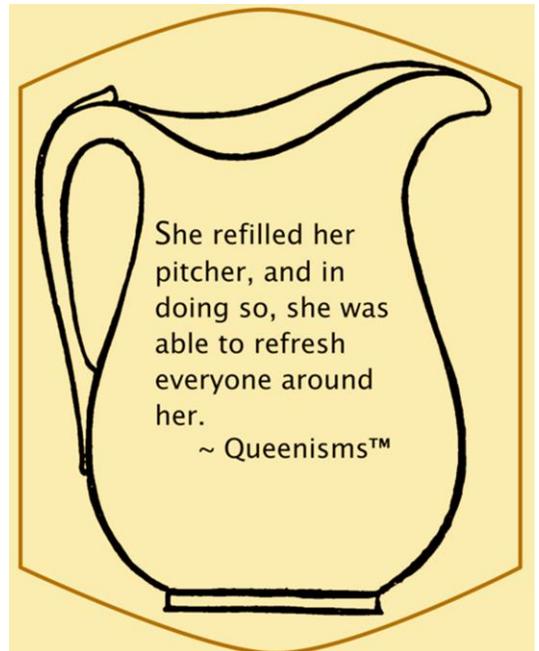
By: Amanda Lorentzen – UW Oshkosh

At UW Oshkosh I have learned so much about self-care and how it is a necessity if school counselors are to be, and stay successful in the field. Personally, I went into the field of counseling because I enjoy helping people, especially children and adolescents. I have learned that in order to help my students the best that I can, I must first help myself. This means taking time out of my very busy schedule and scheduling something just for me.

Taking this time for me has been liberating and frustrating and sometimes extremely hard. One of my self-care activities is reading a book for fun every night before I go to bed. Often times, instead of concentrating and enjoying on my book I find myself drifting away and thinking about what I should or could be doing related to school or my internship site. When this happens, I get angry with myself and then the time I am taking for self-care is not really self-care at all. It's a dreaded cycle that has been hard to get away from.

On the bright side, I do know that if I continue to schedule this time for me it will get easier. Practice makes perfect, right? I have no doubt that self-care does and will continue to be a part of my life. Not only am I doing it for myself, I am doing it for my students as well.

No matter where you are at in your self-care process, keep it up! The benefits will shine through far into the future.



~ 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.
