Fall 2015

Counselors Corner: A Newsletter of the Department of Counselor Education

The College at Brockport

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Counselor Education Faculty Take On New Roles
By Kate Mahar

It is an exciting year for the Counselor Education department as two faculty members change roles and take on new responsibilities. Dr. Tom Hernandez is now the Interim Dean of the School of Education & Human Services and Interim Dean of the Professional Education Unit. In this role, Dr. Hernandez will be promoting the School’s undergraduate and graduate reputation on local, state, national, and global levels. Dr. Hernandez joined the department in 1992 as an adjunct faculty member and has since held several positions including Assistant Professor/Director of the Counseling Center, Coordinator of the College Counseling Program, and most recently, Department Chair. When asked about his new role, Dr. Hernandez shared that he looks forward to “working with the faculty, staff and students as we grow the School of Education and Human Services”.

As Dr. Hernandez transitions out of the Department Chair role, Dr. Susan Seem transitions into it. A faculty member since 1994, Dr. Seem has worked as a professor and in the Counseling Center, as well as serving in a variety of administrative roles. In fact, this will not be Dr. Seem’s first run as Department Chair, as she held the position for six years prior earlier in her career. “I feel honored and humbled to be entrusted with such responsibility”, Dr. Seem says. She adds that although she finds the detail work tedious and boring, she appreciates being a part of department and faculty growth.

CSI Spring Webinar Series

November

Play Therapy Series:
Promoting Play Therapy in the Schools: Practice and Impacts
Drs. Pedro J. Blanco & Ryan Holliman
Tuesday, November 3, 2015
2:00-3:00 PM

Counselors’ Use of the Transtheoretical Model When Collaborating With Other Professions
Drs. Stephanie T. Burns & Daniel R. Cruikshanks
Tuesday, November 10, 2015
7:00-8:00 PM

For more information on the CSI Webinar Series, please visit http://www.csi-net.org/?page=Webinars_Scheduled
Welcome to the Fall 2015 semester. As I write this, I look out my office window and see a lovely day with bright blue sky and fluffy clouds. While it is still relatively warm, leaves are beginning to change color and to fall. This reminds me that life is full of change and challenges that are sometimes anticipated but are often not. This reminds me that much of life is learning to trust the process of life.

A change and challenge for the department is our upcoming CACREP Site Team Visit scheduled for November 8th through the 11th. This is the department’s fourth accreditation cycle (the department’s programs were first accredited in 1987 and were the first programs to receive such distinction in the state of New York). The purpose of a site visit is for the team to confirm that we do what we say we do in our self-study. Team members meet with faculty, adjuncts, and administrators such as our Dean, the Provost and the President of the College. They visit three internship (school college, and mental health) sites. They talk with current students, alumni and site supervisors. They take a tour of campus. All of these meetings and visits are to determine if we are doing what we said we are doing in our self-study in terms of how we meet all the CACREP standards. This is a time for us to be positive and proud about who we are and what we do.

During this time of getting ready for the site visit, I find that I have to remind myself to “trust the process”. I say this all the time to students enrolled in my Integration section. So it is time for me to walk my talk. I trust we will be able to demonstrate that we do what we say we do and that the process of the site visit will reveal who we are and what we do.

I wish you all the best for this semester. And remember to trust the process.

Chair’s Note

Dr. Susan Seem
Department Chair

The summer rains did not deter the crowd from showing up to Dr. Reiner’s house for the annual department picnic. Fun, stories and plenty of advice were shared between students in the program ranging from first semester ‘selfies’ to practicum students and all places in between. Our program is special when compared to other professional graduate programs in the way classes are scheduled and cohorts are created. Instead of matriculating and graduating at the same time with the same people, there is a lot of variation between the class with which we come into the program and the one with which we graduate. We all have our own schedules and commitments, so our paths to graduation are all different. With events like the department picnic and Nu chapter events, you’re able to reconnect with friends you haven’t seen in a couple of semesters, as well as meet people at different stages in the program and those in different emphases. These types of events are also an opportunity to meet the faculty in a more relaxed and informal light. And, if you’re especially lucky, you might be able to try Dr. Reiner’s world famous homemade ice cream!

9TH ANNUAL DEPARTMENT PICNIC: A SUCCESS

By Mike Pernot
A Special Announcement From NYMHCA

By Mike Morde

Dear Students and Faculty,

The Mental Health Counselors of Greater Rochester—a chapter of the New York State Mental Health Counselors Association—was established in 2003 to support the needs of local counselors, mental health providers and graduate students. We host monthly trainings to support the professional development of our members on topics such as Domestic Violence, Disasters and Mental Health Implications, Diagnosis and State Licensure, LGBT Issues, Mental Illness, Sexual Addictions, Veterans’ Mental Health Issues, and more.

In February we launched our revamped website MentalHealthCounselors.org! There are 32 changes and additions to our website, which were done for a number of reasons, including:

- Greater website access on portable devices
- Interactive resources and information for students and area professionals
- Greater outreach to mental health counselors and consumers
- Interaction between the chapter website and social media
- Increased presence on the Internet and popular search engines

We addressed all of these issues by investing in better software that will allow us to be more interactive with you and your needs as a developing counselor. Check out our President’s Blog for regular updates and articles on professional issues, get up to date on current events through our live Facebook feed on the homepage, or visit our Counselor’s Forum to look for answers to questions you may have about anything related to our profession.

Join us every second Saturday at 10am at the University of Rochester, or stop by and drink a hot beverage with us at one of our networking events. The dates and times of those meetings and events can be found on our new interactive calendar webpage. Not sure where we hold chapter meetings? Plug in your address into our Google Map.

We hope you join our chapter—if you’re not a member already—to help stay current with the local and state advocacy efforts as well as policy issues affecting our profession. If you’d like more information or if you would like to contact us, please visit us at MentalHealthCounselors.org.

Thank you very much. We’ll see you at the next meeting!

Joshua E. Maldonado, LMHC, NCC
Class of 2009
Chapter President
Mental Health Counselors of Greater Rochester
president@mentalhealthcounselors.org

Mike Morde
Class of 2016
Chapter Webmaster
Co-Chair of Public Relations
webmaster@mentalhealthcounselors.org

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**Master’s Capstone Research Project Topics**

Nicole Smith- Dialectic Behavior Therapy and Mindfulness: Its effects on goal directed, ineffective, and harmful behaviors  
Patricia Williams-McGahee- Mindfulness Meditation: An Intervention in Addressing Stress and Anxiety in Inmates  
Elyse E. Kusse- “What do I want to do when I grow up?” A Look at the Impact of Career Curriculum in the Fifth Grade

Stephanie DeRico- Implications of Working with Trauma: Therapists’ Perspectives  
Mark Bruce- Attendance Works  
Katheyrn LaPorta- Consumer Perceived Barriers to Graduation at Wyoming County PROS

Courtney Furness- Cultural Competency: A Self Reflection  
Christopher Pierri- Signs of Suicide (SOS) Prevention Program: A Program Evaluation

**EDC Scholarly Conference**

Students in EDC 606 and Implementation II will present their research at the EDC Scholarly Conference on Wednesday, November 18, 2015 from 7 to 9pm. This event will be held in the Golden Eagle Room at the downtown MetroCenter Campus. Everyone is welcome to attend!

**EDC 606 Action Research Topics**

Joseph Becker, Amanda Dunn, Ashley Glover, Renee Finnemore—Exploring Diversity at the College at Brockport  
Elissa Ostrander, Amanda Horth, and Kaleigh Dumigan—A Qualitative Study of Diversity Training Among The College of Brockport Graduate Counselor Education Students

Frank Noll, Kristen Randall, Cara Johnson—Improving Professional Writing Skills of Students in the Counselor Education Program
Upcoming Conferences and Counselor Education Events

Rochester Chapter NYMHCA Meeting
November 14, 2015 10am-12pm
U of R Campus

EDC Scholarly Conference
November 18, 2015 7pm-9pm
Golden Eagle Room, MetroCenter

NY School Counselor Association (NYSSCA) Annual Conference
November 20-21, 2015
The Sagamore Resort, Lake George, Bolton Landing, NY

Rochester Chapter NYMHCA Meeting
December 12, 2015 10am-12pm
U of R Campus

Nu Chapter Initiation & Department Graduation
December 11, 2015
Brockport Campus

Western New York School Counselor Consortium (WNYSCC)
February 3, 2016
RIT Inn & Conference Center
Henrietta, NY

American Counseling Association (ACA) Annual Conference & Expo
March 31-April 3, 2016
Montreal Convention Center
Montreal, QC, Canada

EDC Students Walk for Suicide Prevention

By Jenna Mollura

On Sunday, September 27th, several EDC students participated in the community Out of the Darkness Walk. This 2.2 mile walk, held at Genesee Valley Park, helps raise money for research and education programs directed toward suicide prevention. Claiming more lives than war, murder, and natural disasters combined, suicide is the fourth leading cause of death for people ages 15-65 in the United States. Utilizing funds from the Out of the Darkness Walk and other events like it, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (ASFP) hopes to reduce the annual suicide rate by 20% by the year 2025. Counselor Education students rallied together to support the ASFP’s mission to change the conversation about mental health and, ultimately, to end this tragic loss of life. We were happy to have Joe Feeney, Renee Finnemore, Gianna Grosser, Shelly Infantolino, Cara Johnson, Jenna Mollura, Sarah Moore, Mike Morde, Frank Noll, Deborah Ricci, Cameron Scharf, and Collin Sivers as a part of the Brockport Counselor Education team. As a team, we raised over $1,000 for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

As a Counselor Ed student, you have access to the department’s library of books on topics such as multicultural counseling, substance abuse counseling, group counseling, research and assessment, family therapy, human development, and more. Stop by the Counselor Ed library (153 Brown) at any time or email Kate Mahar at edcga@brockport.edu for information.
### Dr. Susan Seem

**Dr. Susan Seem** is settling into her new role as Department Chair, developing course schedules and answering questions about the department’s programs. She is focused on preparing for the CACREP site visit in early November. Dr. Seem will be presenting “Two for the price of one: Experiential approach to teaching research through department assessment” at the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Conference with Summer, Bob, and two students—Beth Cenci and Terri Clark. Dr. Seem is also serving as an Expert Consultant for the NY State Office of Professional Discipline. In this role, she consults and testifies in hearings regarding ethical charges against LMHCs.

### Dr. Patricia Goodspeed

**Dr. Patricia Goodspeed** has more than twelve years of combined experience working as an employee assistance counselor in Connecticut, as a counselor with adults in career transition, substance abuse counselor, and as a college counselor in New York. She has consulted for business and industry, and has been an invited speaker for local businesses and women’s groups. In addition, she has worked extensively with individuals who have issues of grief and loss of all types, as well as issues related to food and eating behavior. She currently maintains a small private counseling practice. Dr. Goodspeed’s more recent research includes the lived experiences of those who are obese. She received a research fellowship at the University of Hertforeshire, UK, where she furthered her research knowledge of treatments for obesity. A current project involves the experiences of alumni of color in a counselor education program. Writing and presentation topics include issues of social class and the counseling process, creativity and its relationship to both counseling process and counselor education, and work-family issues. She has presented in the international counseling community, including Switzerland, the UK, and Jamaica.

### Rafael Outland

**Rafael Outland** is a native of College Park, GA. He received a bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Clark Atlanta University and a master’s degree in Education (Specialization in School Counseling, K-12) from Boston University. He is pursuing a PhD in Counseling and Counselor Education at the University of Rochester. His dissertation is titled “The Meaning and Experiences of Violence among Urban African-American adolescent males (UAAM).” This qualitative study explores the experiences of UAAM that influence their attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of violence. Utilizing interviews and a focus group, the aim of the study is to provide UAAM a voice regarding individual, social, and institutional factors influencing these youth’s meaning and perceptions of violence. Mr. Outland’s research interests include exploring the developmental trajectory of violence, primarily of marginalized youth, as well as program evaluation and counselor supervision. He also remains engaged in youth outreach and social activism in the local Rochester community, through his affiliation with grassroots organizations, such as Teen Empowerment Incorporated (TE), The Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, Goodfellas, and the Baobab Cultural Center. Mr. Outland’s primary aim as a counselor educator is to empower his students, in hopes that they can empower their clients, in “becoming” agents of individual, social, and institutional change.

### Dr. Claudette Brown-Smythe

**Claudette Brown-Smythe** is one of the department’s newer faculty members. This semester, she is teaching EDC 612: Human Experience. She also supervises EDC 735 Implementation I students and teaches the bridge program. Claudette recently successfully defended her doctoral dissertation, titled “The relationship of spirituality and depression on the subjective well-being of Jamaican college students: A cross sectional study of teacher training institutions in Jamaica.”
Dr. Robert Dobmeier

Dr. Robert Dobmeier has written a chapter on “Retaining Sobriety: Relapse Prevention Strategies” that will be published in *Substance Abuse Counseling: Theory and Practice*, Edited by P. Stevens and R. Smith, 6th edition. Bob presented “Aging Persons Need to Use Medicare for Mental Health Counseling: Counselor Advocacy” at the AADA Conference in New York in July 2015. He will present with Dr. Summer Reiner “Teaching Leadership and Advocacy for Professional Counseling Practice in Diverse Settings” at the ACES Conference in Philadelphia in October 2015, where he will also present “Two for the Price of One: Experiential Approach to Teaching Research through Departmental Assessment” with Drs. Thomas Hernández, Susan Seem, and Summer Reiner and with students Elizabeth Cenci and Terri Clark. As Past President of AADA, Bob is chairing a task group on Counseling Services for Older Adults. He continues his research with students, alumni, and the Criminal Justice Department on reentry of inmates to the community.

Dr. Summer Reiner

Dr. Summer Reiner is currently a candidate for ACES (Association for Counselor Education and Supervision) President and a candidate for the ACA Governing Council. Dr. Reiner is co-presenting in March at the ACA Conference in Montreal. She will be speaking about work addiction at an ACA learning institute on process addictions. Dr. Reiner will also be co-presenting about life balance at the CASE II District Conference in Philadelphia in February, alongside Kerry Gotham from Alumni Engagement. Dr. Reiner is in the process of planning the 25th Annual WNYSCC Conference and the first Counselor Education Alumni Reception directly following the conference. Finally, she currently serves as a reviewer for the JCD (ACA’s Journal) and Adultspan (AADA’s Journal).

Student Spotlight, College Specialization: Lisa Jones

**Emphasis (college, school, mental health):** College

**What brought you to the field of counseling?:** My interest in counseling stems from the desire to see students succeed at obtaining their educational and career related goals. Many students fall between the cracks and simply have no one to help ensure their realization of obtaining a college degree. One of the reasons I desire to be a counselor is to help students, especially those underrepresented on college and university campuses, become successful in reaching their dreams.

**Specific areas of interest?:** Student development is my main focus. Helping students to develop academically, socially, and career wise has always interested me. I believe in support and encouragement to help prepare future generations for college and beyond.

**What do you plan to do after you graduate?:** It is my goal to become the director of a program such as EOP, McNair, or Student Support Services. These programs help an array of students who would otherwise not be on the college campus.

**What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?:** I like to read though unable to read for pleasure lately. I also enjoy sewing because it allows me to take time for me.

**Anything personal about you that makes you who you are!:** I believe in unconditional positive regard, even before I knew what it was all about. Treat people like you want to be treated and this world would be a better place.
ALUMNUS SPOTLIGHT
NICHOLAS DELANEY
Class of 2012

I am currently a therapist at Keuka College working within a team of health and counseling professionals. Because my clients are all college students, the majority of them are late teens and early twenties. However, older adult learners also utilize services as well. My duties at the College include individual therapy, group therapy, and psychoeducational outreach. I began this position in early July of 2015, after spending nearly three years working in a not for profit clinic.

What makes the counselor education program at Brockport so special is the emphasis that it has on nurturing the therapist that all students have inside themselves. Out in the working world, you will learn how to meet the needs of your specific population and you will learn to adapt to the specific systems that your work place utilizes. However, it is in the program that you grow into the professional that you desire to be. Beginning in “Self in Society” the professors urge you to connect with your thoughts, your feelings, and the way you experience your world. Through your studies you are challenged to find your place within the helping professions and how you wish to impact others. Differences are encouraged and celebrated. You learn from yourself and your peers as much as you do from your professors. I carry these lessons with me every day. The support and encouragement I received is what gives me the strength to continue to be the professional that I know I need to be.

The best advice that I have for young professionals was given to me when I was just starting in my career. I was chipping away at my post graduate hours, learning what it meant to be a fully independent professional, and grappling with how it felt to sit with very ill people who at times needed even more than I was able to provide. I found that the supervision I received at my workplace left me wanting more, so I had begun seeing a professional in my area for additional support. One day while processing she said something that changed the way I worked every day moving forward. She offered me the following:

“When we are faced with a difficult situation in our lives, something that we struggle with, it is fairly natural to just push through it. We have this idea that no matter what is in front of us we have to overcome it. The problem with this is not that we are wrong, for people are quite resilient. The question we need to ask ourselves is what will I look like after all of this is done?” This statement was so impactful to me because it reframed for me a concept I had never considered changeable. I was always a driven person, never stopping until I reached my goals, whatever they were. Her words forced me to understand that, in many ways, sacrificing myself in order to reach a goal was the only true way I could actually fail. Today I work very hard to know my limits. I am constantly aware of how I am being impacted by what I hear, who I see, and what I do, ensuring that when I become overloaded, I need to begin taking care of me.

The advice I have for others pursuing a career in counseling is to never stop growing. Every job, supervisor, colleague, and client has something to teach. Though not all lessons will be one’s that you are looking to learn, know that it is up to you to use every lesson in a way that is positive for you.

CACREP SITE TEAM VISIT

November 8-11, 2015
2-4 CACREP team members will visit Campus for three days. During that time, the team members will meet with students, faculty, administrators, and site supervisors from the Counselor Ed Department.
Preparing to Integrate?

Students must apply for EDC 720 during the semester prior to enrolling. Faculty will then review the application and notify students of their decision during a mandatory meeting.

Prior to entering Integration, each student must complete the following:

- Child Abuse Reporting training: the New York State Mandated Reporter Training is available at http://nysmandatedreporter.org/
- Six documented counseling sessions.
- For students in the school counseling emphasis: Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) training (provided in EDC 619 Counseling in School Settings).
- For students in the school counseling emphasis: Harassment and Bullying Prevention Certification Training (DASA)

Implementation I Internship Site Placements

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<tr>
<th>Amanda Crowley</th>
<th>Kara Hiltz</th>
<th>Jillian Malley</th>
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<td>Caledonia-Mumford Central School</td>
<td>Wheatland-Chili Middle/High School</td>
<td>Merton Williams Middle School</td>
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<td>Ebonesha Graham</td>
<td>Kelsey James</td>
<td>Raymond Manioci</td>
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<td>Rochester City School District</td>
<td>Catholic Family Center</td>
<td>Merton Williams Middle School</td>
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<td>Colleen Halbohn</td>
<td>Lisa Jones</td>
<td>Sarah Moore</td>
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<td>The College at Brockport</td>
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<td>Charlene Linzy</td>
<td>Jaclyn Singer</td>
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<td>Erie Community College</td>
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Implementation II Internship Site Placements

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<tr>
<th>Mark Bruce</th>
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<th>Nicole Smith</th>
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<td>Brockport High School</td>
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<td>Wayne Behavioral Health Network</td>
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<td>Stephanie DeRico</td>
<td>Amy Levermore</td>
<td>Patricia Williams-McGahee</td>
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<td>Unity Health System</td>
<td>Palmyra-Macedon High School</td>
<td>Monroe County Sheriff’s Office- Monroe Correctional Facility</td>
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<td>Courtney Furness</td>
<td>Christopher Pierri</td>
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<td>Catholic Family Center</td>
<td>Greece Arcadia High School</td>
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<td>Elyse Kusse</td>
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Nu Chapter Fall Events

Nu Chapter Fall Events

Process Addictions Screening Event
Metro Center
Thursday, November 5th

Decompression Session
Scotland Yard
Tuesday, November 11th, 7pm

Decompression Session
Scotland Yard 7pm
Tuesday, December 8th, 7pm

Nu Chapter Initiation
Brockport Campus
December 11, 2015

Welcome back to the fall semester!

Over the summer, Nu Chapter was busy prepping for another exciting series of events for the year. Please check out our calendar for all the information and to see the exciting things that your board has created for the 2015-2016 academic year. You will see that one of the major events we’re hosting this semester is the documentary screening of “The Courage to Love,” with a panel discussion afterwards featuring Luke Myers (Thursday, November 5th, 6:30pm). Luke is a valuable part of the counseling center staff and our college’s primary Alcohol and Other Drugs counselor. Whether you are in the mental health counseling track, the school or college track, pursuing your C.A.S.A.C. certification, or curious about process addictions, Luke has insightful experience from which we can all learn! Join us for the documentary and the panel discussion in November. You’ll learn a lot!

If you are not a member yet, please consider applying! We need you to help serve both the counseling profession as well as your fellow students. Nu Chapter is a wonderful way to connect with as many counselors as possible not just in our state, but nationally. If you want to help but aren’t sure how, please speak with us, or come to one of our informal Decompression Sessions (see our calendar of events).

All of our board members and committee leaders are happy to discuss Nu Chapter with you and answer any questions you may have. Additionally, feel free to contact our Membership department if you have questions about how to apply.

I wish you all a fantastic fall semester! See you at the next event!

Michael Morde
President, Nu Chapter
Chi Sigma Iota

FALL APA WORKSHOPS

Linda Hacker, the Librarian at the MetroCenter campus, will be hosting an APA workshop this fall.

Saturday, November 14th
MetroCenter Room 341B

APA & Library Services: 10:30am-11:30am
Research & Database Searching: 12pm-1pm
Emphasis (college, school, mental health):
Mental Health

What brought you to the field of counseling?:
I like working individually with people to get to know them and build positive relationships. I’ve held jobs in the human services field but never felt like I was getting to the root of some of the issues that were affecting people’s lives. Counseling provides that one-on-one relationship and allows me to help people in a deeper and more meaningful way.

Specific areas of interest?:
I really enjoy working with young adults and adolescents and am also pursuing my CASAC-T in order to work with alcohol and substance use cases. I am really interested in creative arts therapy. At some point in my career, I want to be able to explore and incorporate other mediums to assist the therapeutic process and compliment talk therapy. In addition, I love animals and would also like to explore animal-assisted therapy.

What do you plan to do after you graduate?:
After graduating, I am hoping to be able to work in an agency towards getting my licensure and beginning my mental health counselor career. In the future, I want to be able to incorporate creative arts and animal-assisted therapy into my practice and may pursue certifications for these.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?:
I’m currently a career counselor at a local agency where I assist individuals recovering from mental illness with their vocational goals. I’m an avid reader and love fantasy and fiction books. I spend as much time outside as possible when the weather is nice and love spending time with friends and family.

Anything personal about you that makes you who you are!:
I was a girl scout for 13 years and I love camping, hiking, and playing sports. I’m always up for fun and challenging activities!

Genesee Valley BOCES offers DASA Trainings at the College at Brockport several times throughout the semester. This training is required for all students in the school counseling track.

Dates:
Wednesday, November 18, 2015; 5:30 pm-9:00 pm
Tuesday, December 1, 2015; 5:30 pm-9:00 pm

If this option does not appeal to you, you may complete the DASA Training through a NY State Approved Provider. All of this information is available at:
http://www.brockport.edu/certification/DASA.html
Emphasis (college, school, mental health): School Counseling

What brought you to the field of counseling? The reason I was drawn into the counseling profession came from my passion to help others. Upon graduation, I worked for Hillside Children’s Center working in a residential setting helping children who struggle with behavioral and/or mental health difficulties to successfully transition back into their homes and community. With the combination of my Anthropology degree and my counseling courses has increased my ability to develop relationships, while being able to empathize and understand clients holistically. Through my experience at Hillside, I was able to have an epiphany moment realizing I wanted to continue offering support and help provide a voice for those being unheard.

Specific areas of interest? I am interested in working with the high refugee population in Rochester, pushing anti-bullying programs, and pushing for an increase in resources for offering different sports programs.

What do you plan to do after you graduate? I am not sure what my plan is going to be yet because I haven’t decided if I want to stay in the New York area or go back down South towards Virginia, North Carolina, or DC area closer to family. I hope to have attained a middle school counselor position in the inner city with having the option to help coach wrestling or baseball.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? I enjoy being around friends and family, taking road trips, taking out my canoe, hiking, playing any type of sport, attending different sporting events, going to the “beach” (Duran and Charlotte), cooking, playing any type of board game, and playing kickball every Wednesday night.

Anything personal about you that makes you who you are! As a brother and son, my family has been a huge support and has helped develop the person I am today. My support system encouraged me to attend a three-month NOLS trip to the Australian Bush that changed me forever. This trip shaped who I am today, by being apart of an environment that encouraged me to truly see my passions, rediscover my motivation to learn, demonstrate my leadership abilities and my ability to develop relationships with others, but most importantly, it allowed the return of my self-confidence.