



# School Psychology Newsletter

## Fall 2014 Edition

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## Intern Updates: Where are they now?

### *Caitlin Reddy, MA:*

Caitlin is currently completing her internship in Williamsburg James City County Public Schools. She is responsible for one elementary and one high school. Both schools have very welcoming staff and diverse student populations. She has enjoyed spending most of her time consulting with teachers, developing behavior interventions, and providing individual counseling to students at the high school. Caitlin receives weekly individual supervision where she and her supervisor discuss cases and review her counseling videotapes. As the year continues, Caitlin looks forward to having more learning experiences that will help to develop her professional competencies in a variety of areas.

### *Joe Sims, MA:*

Joe is currently completing his internship with Greenville County District Schools in South Carolina. He is responsible for two elementary schools that he visits for an entire day each week. These schools have a similar population of students, but there is a discrepancy of services psychologists are able to provide. Joe works closely with administration, teachers, and parents to develop behavioral plans and assists in the coordination of various meetings. In addition to Joe's school assignments, he screens students and interviews parents through Child Find twice a month. Although Joe is mostly in the elementary schools, he has had the opportunity to provide counseling to a high school student and practice mindfulness techniques with him. Most of Joe's time is spent problem-solving with the Assistance Team, consulting with Speech Therapists and teachers on interventions, conducting psychological evaluations, and writing reports. Joe has quickly learned how to juggle many tasks and is looking forward to facing the challenges within the school and introducing mindfulness to larger populations.

### *Mandy VanDyke, MA:*

Mandy is completing her internship with Wise County Public Schools. Wise County is a rural community in Southwest Virginia which borders Kentucky. Although it is a small community, Wise County offers many different programs for their students. For example, there is a postgraduate program which provides students who have special needs on-site training in a school-based business. Students operate a school-based consignment/gift shop, which is open to the public, and help with a catering service which is limited to school events. It is a full day program and serves students in the 12th grade as well as students aged 18 – 22. Mandy is the only intern with Wise County, but there are two other school psychologists. She is responsible for an Elementary School, Primary School, Middle School, and High School. In Wise County, the school psychologists' main role is to lead assessment review meetings and to evaluate students for special education services. Mandy has led many assessment review



meetings and has tested quite a few students so far this year. However, she has also had the chance to help restructure the child study process. She is currently working with a social worker piloting a program that helps to incorporate RtI using curriculum based measures through child study meetings. Mandy is co-leading group counseling sessions that focus on social skills at the middle school level. Additionally, she had the chance to work on behavioral and academic interventions with various teachers. Overall, Mandy is enjoying her internship experience tremendously. Everyone in this system is so friendly and welcoming, and she is excited to see what the rest of the year has to bring!

#### *Sandra Gonzalez, MA:*

Sandra is an intern for Manassas City Public Schools in Northern Virginia. She is responsible for two schools: Baldwin Elementary and Weems Elementary. She spends an equal amount of time at the two schools. Both schools are Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Baldwin has a population of 674 students and Weems has a population of almost 800. So far, Sandra has been spending most of her time learning about the schools and the system, conducting observations, attending meetings, and assessing students. She has done some counseling and consultation. Sandra also completed her first threat assessment and attended a parent workshop. Her expectations for the rest of the year are to continue to learn and grow in her profession. Now that she is getting more acquainted with the schools and her role, Sandra hopes to become more involved with the students and be a better resource to others.

#### *Kelsey Owens, MA:*

Kelsey is completing her internship in Chesterfield County Public Schools. CCPS has 63 schools that serve over 58,000 students. The psychological services department consists of the supervisor of psychological services, 32 school psychologists, and 3 interns. Kelsey is primarily responsible for one elementary school. However, she also participates in a number of rotation placements in order to get a wide variety of experiences. The rotation placements include secondary school placement, preschool evaluations, assessment of English Language Learners (ELL), and autism/low Incidence populations. CCPS serves a very diverse population of students and has provided wonderful experiences so far. Along with assessment cases, she has been involved in the child study team, consultation, 504 plans, and numerous professional development workshops. Kelsey also co-led a social skills group, has been involved in a school wide critical incident intervention team, and conducted FBAs. She has enjoyed getting to know the administration, teachers, and staff at her school. They have gone above and beyond to welcome her and make her feel at home. Kelsey is looking forward to the experiences that the rest of the school year will bring and is excited to continue to grow.

#### *Krista Gieseke-Smith, MA:*

Krista's internship is split between the JMU Child Development Clinic and Harrisonburg City Public Schools. At the CDC, she does 1 evaluation per week (this includes the scoring and report writing). She has had several really interesting cases including referrals for autism, ADHD, anxiety, depression, anger, etc. There are a lot of personality cases that come through the clinic that she does not typically get in the schools. In Harrisonburg City, Krista does not have specific schools that are assigned to her. She "floats" around as needed. She has done one assessment in the schools, is starting her second, and has her third referral. In terms of direct intervention, she leads a social skills group at the high school with high functioning students with ASD, provides consultation to a first year kindergarten teacher, offers individual counseling with a student whose father was recently released from incarceration, and a designed a behavioral intervention for a preschooler who has difficulty keeping his hands/body to himself. She also attends Child Study and Assessment Review meetings. Harrisonburg also has a new SpEd director this year who is trying to "revamp" the department. The SpEd teachers and the School Psychs have been going through all of the special ed.



students' files together to ensure their IEP goals are related to their identified disability and that they are receiving services and accommodations that are directly related to their IEP goals. This has been very time consuming, but very helpful and worthwhile.

#### *Ted Tynan, MA:*

Ted is an intern in Chesterfield County Public Schools and is responsible for Elizabeth Davis Middle School. He is the only intern currently working at a Middle School and absolutely loves it so far! He has spent the majority of his days consulting with teachers, SPED staff, and administrators about certain students, but that is beginning to change now that the referrals are starting to pile up. His school is a pilot school for an alternative SLD identification process (Pattern of Strength & Weaknesses vs. Discrepancy), so he has been busy learning new assessments and new report styles on the fly. Additionally, he has started an individual counseling case and hopes to begin a counseling group early to mid-November. He spends roughly three days per week at his school, and the other two days are spent on a rotation schedule. Ted recently finished a six-week rotation with the Early Childhood program where he tagged along to multidisciplinary assessments conducted within the child's home (Speech, Psych, Social, Developmental, etc). This week he is beginning his rotation with the ESOL program which is run by the bilingual School Psychologist in Chesterfield.

#### *Brittany Jones, MA:*

Roanoke City Schools has around 13,200 students. Brittany is primarily responsible for a middle school of about 670 students and an elementary school of about 710 students. The student population is very diverse and primarily from low SES families, though there are pockets of affluence in certain neighborhoods in the district. So far, her time has been split between assessment, consultation, meetings, and group and individual counseling. She has had some difficult assessment and counseling cases which has made her appreciate her practicum experience as a stepping stone that prepared her to make difficult decisions. After school on Wednesdays, she co-leads a mindfulness group with one of the other psychologists using the MindUp curriculum. They have a group of 12 fourth graders who currently participate in the Boys and Girls club after school. So far, it's really fun! She recently presented for four sessions of RCPS's Professional Development day on Social-Emotional Learning and Classroom Techniques. It was exhausting and slightly intimidating, but also a blast! As a result of that, one of the teachers at her elementary school is having her come in and introduce mindfulness techniques to her 5th grade class. For the remainder of the year, she anticipates getting more comfortable with all of the paperwork and system processes. Getting to know the system's policies has been a bit of a challenge, but she knows it will just take time to get used to everything. She would like the school psych community to be aware of teacher burnout and frustration. It's surprising to her how frustrated teachers get without being aware of how frustrated they are. Our graduate program emphasizes being constantly aware of our emotions, how they affect our mental health, and techniques to improve our mental health. Teachers don't always have the same tools in their mental health tool kit that we do. How can teachers be expected to be good emotional models for students when they are at their emotional wits-end? Just a thought that she wanted to share.

#### *Jeremiah Jordan, MA:*

Jeremiah's internship is split between the Shenandoah Child Development Clinic and Charlottesville City Schools. His experience at the Shenandoah Child Development Clinic has been really structured. He has weekly supervision, and he assesses one child per week. Each week he also has a staffing, which is similar to an eligibility meeting in the schools. He performs about four cases a month and conducts about one informing a month which is when a parent comes in to discuss all the results from the evaluation. Beyond that, he spends his time writing/editing reports. He has had a wide variety of ages, including two year olds,



middle and high school aged children. His cases at the clinic have also had a wide variety of referral reasons, which has given him the opportunity to use a wide variety of assessment instruments. In Charlottesville, Jeremiah serves two elementary schools. He has been involved in several different activities so far, such as counseling, consultations, academic and educational interventions, as well as assessing. He has been involved in several different kinds of assessments, including gifted testing, psychological testing, and most recently he has been helping out with some educational testing at a school that is not one of his assignments. His goals at the clinic are to continue improving his assessing and report writing skills. He also has a lot of contact with professionals from other disciplines at the clinic and one of his goals for the year is to develop more expertise on their role/function. In Charlottesville, his goals are to become a well-known face within the schools, which is somewhat hard because he is only there part time. He also wants to try to get involved in as many beneficial activities as he can to help his assigned schools.

### *Courtney Dameron, MA:*

Courtney is interning in Cleveland County Schools, NC and working at two elementary schools. One of her schools is one of the largest student populations in Cleveland County, and the other is one of the smallest. It's nice to see the differences in how each operates! Most of her time is spent operating the RtI system (which includes goal setting, tracking and graphing progress monitoring data, establishing baselines, and running meetings) and doing assessments. October seems to be the busy month for them since RtI is already in place. The Problem Solving Team is just now getting the data it needs to make referrals. Courtney is starting to receive a few counseling referrals and has been called in to help with discipline. She has talked with her supervisor and is in the process of setting up visits to some of the unique classes in Cleveland County. She looks forward to continuing to master the RtI process and the rest of the school year!

## Get to Know the First Years

We are incredibly pleased to welcome 9 first year students into our School Psychology community here at James Madison University!



Spencer Brookbank  
Hometown: Ashburn, VA  
Favorite Hobby: Hiking/Camping



Breonna Davis  
Hometown: Metropolis, IL  
Favorite Hobby: Exercising



Priya Saxena  
Hometown: Manassas, VA  
Favorite Hobby: Yoga & Travel



Lizzy Coalter  
Hometown: Midlothian, VA  
Favorite Hobby: Painting



Steven Powell  
Hometown: Kent Island, MD  
Favorite Hobby: Harmonica



Mandi Shifflett  
Hometown: Harrisonburg, VA  
Favorite Hobby: Scuba Diving



Denton Warburton  
Hometown: Hilliard, OH  
Favorite Hobby: Hiking



Ginger Wayland  
Hometown: Gaithersburg, MD  
Favorite Hobby: Volleyball



Michelle Whitham  
Hometown: Lamar, CO  
Favorite Hobby: Reading

## School Psychology Master's Celebration

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the School Psychology program proudly announced the successful completion of Master's requirements to an outstanding group of emerging school psychologists. Students, families, and friends came together to celebrated the first major step in the process of becoming a professional. The James Madison School Psychology program prides itself on training competent professionals in the areas of assessment, consultation, counseling, crisis management and prevention as well as many core fundamentals in the areas of education and psychology. Congratulations to all students on their accomplishments!



## Interprofessional Collaboration

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014, School Counseling, Occupational Therapy, Nursing, School Psychology, Special Education and Speech/Language Pathology graduate students gathered to enhance their collaboration skills. The day-long workshop began by separating students into one of five groups to learn more about each discipline. Following lunch, 7 groups were formed to process two case studies in depth. The cases required the students to contribute and collaborate with each other to achieve desired goals. The day concluded with regrouping and discussing take-home points to use in the future when collaborating with others in the schools.

## What's New in the Woodcock Johnson Cognitive IV?

On September 12, 2014, James Madison University welcomed Jessica Gurley, of Riverside Publishing to facilitate a workshop, presenting the newest features and benefits of the WJ IV. The fourth edition of the Woodcock-Johnson Tests provides the most diagnostically useful measure of CHC abilities for contemporary assessment needs. The workshop welcomed current school psychology students, faculty and members of the surrounding areas as the new WJ IV was presented in detail. This workshop was incredibly beneficial to the continuing education of professionals in the field of school psychology.



## Page County Advisory Board

JMU has provided mental health and assessment services in Page County for the past ten years under the direction of Dr. Timothy Schulte. This is currently provided at the Health Place located in Stanley, VA. Previously, students in the CI Doctoral program and Counseling program have participated in service delivery to clients. Dr. Debi Kipps-Vaughan recently began working with clients at the JMU Page County site, primarily working with children and adolescents. The long standing success of this program has developed into the formulation of a JMU steering committee to consider potential training and service opportunities: the Rural Integrated Behavioral Health and Primary Care Training Steering Committee.

Data from a recent (2013) Community Needs Assessment indicates Mental and Behavioral Health needs in Page County to be a high priority, with Page County suicide rates reported as worse than the Virginia average. There are many opportunities to integrate community services and training needs for students within this venue. The steering committee is just beginning to explore potential training openings, with School Psychology being very present at the table. Drs. Kipps-Vaughan and Ashton Trice are both members of the steering committee and are representing the program's interest in how services in this rural community can benefit students in the future. They plan to keep the community updated on this adventure. If you have thoughts or ideas about this type of service delivery opportunity, please contact Drs. Kipps-Vaughan or Trice.

## Strive. Grow. THRIVE!

Strive. Grow. THRIVE! is the theme for School Psychology Awareness Week 2013. NASP's goal for this year is to engage students at all levels of learning and development to promote personal achievement, growth, and resilience, as well as a sense of connectedness and wellbeing. It has become tradition at JMU to recognize school psychologists around the community and give gifts of appreciation during this week. School Psychology students also work hard to raise awareness through presentations to teachers and handing out pencils or bookmarks at the Commons on campus.

## Fall 2014 VASP Conference

The fall 2014 VPA conference was held on October 15<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> at the Westin Hotel in Richmond, VA. Wednesday was the VASP board meeting and Thursday and Friday were filled with helpful workshops. Clinicians, School Psychologists, and students were in attendance for CE Credits and professional development hours. JMU's School Psychology faculty, Dr. Asthon Trice, presented along with program alum, Nick Curtis, Ed.S., a session titled *Transitioning Students with Learning Disabilities to Postsecondary Education*.

**SAVE THE DATE: Spring workshop on the new WISC-V – Friday, June 12, 2015.**



## Outstanding Graduate Student Award



Third year student, Mandy VanDyke, was awarded the 2014 Virginia Academy of School Psychologists' Outstanding Graduate Student Award. The award is intended to honor graduate students across the state that exemplify academic excellence and contribute to the field of school psychology. She was recognized for this accomplishment at the membership luncheon during the Fall VPA conference. Congratulations, Mandy!

## Clinicians in Residence

*The JMU School Psychology Program is supported by excellent community practitioners. We are appreciative of their many contributions to student learning and support*

### **Nick Curtis, Ed.S.**

Nick, a school psychologist in Madison County Public Schools, provides consultative services to the program through his work evaluating outcomes of the program's Cultural Competency Practice Initiative.

### **Susan Magowan-Black, Ed.S**

Susan, a local trilingual School Psychologist, continues to offer support to the program to develop the cultural competencies of our students. She provides a presentation to the first year students as a part of the Assessment I course. She presents on many important aspects of working with children and families who are English Language Learners (ELL). Topics include the use and importance of interpreters within meetings and assessments, different styles of interpretation, and evaluating interpreter fit within various settings. Susan will offer a second training in the spring focused on classroom management strategies for the diverse student and provides consultation to second year students who are assessing English Language Learners.



**Corey Reed, PsyD.,**

Corey, a local mental health provider, supports second year students through facilitation of a peer process group. This group provides a place for students to reflect on practicum experiences and their own professional identity and growth.

**Terri Sisson, Ed.S.**

Terri, a school psychologist in Louisa County Public School, provides class presentations to first year students and second year students highlighting her role as a leader at the state and national level and professional networking and collaboration skills.

## O. Ashton Trice Memorial Scholarship

The O. Ashton Trice scholarship is in its fourth year and was established to assist an academically outstanding student in the School Psychology Program at James Madison with his or her second year summer tuition. The *O. Ashton Trice Memorial Scholarship* was awarded to Nahal Khalatbari in September 2014.

Additional contributions would allow the endowment to keep up with rising tuition costs and expand the award to more students. Contributions can be made through the JMU Foundation to the O. Ashton Trice Scholarship Endowment, #2585. Thank you for your support!

## Jonathon Davis Memorial Scholarship

In the Spring of 2014, third year student, Mandy VanDyke, was awarded the Jonathan Davis Memorial Scholarship from the Department of Graduate Psychology. This scholarship provides financial support for a student in a Graduate Psychology program who has a special interest in suicide prevention and suicide awareness and has shown consistent and sincere effort to lessen the impact of child and adolescent suicide. One of Mandy's interests within the realm of school psychology is prevention and intervention efforts of youth suicide.

Mandy is currently conducting a research study, *Suicidal Behavior Among Elementary School Students and Current Needs in Prevention Practices: A Survey of Virginia School Counselors*. The purpose of her research project is to examine Virginia school counselor's current prevention and intervention efforts in regards to suicidal behavior at the elementary school level. Previous research was conducted in this area which surveyed Virginia school psychologists and that research found that school counselors are the most likely school professional to intervene. Ultimately, Mandy hopes to examine and expand upon the collaboration efforts among school professionals when providing these services to children and their families

## Support Future School Psychologists



To support the School Psychology Program and the training of our students, consider making a contribution to the JMU Foundation specifying Account Number 14789. We value your continued support in maintaining our educational excellence by providing funds that go towards testing and materials for student research. Please keep in mind, many Graduate Assistantships no longer cover the full 12 credits per semester or any of summer tuition.

**Please mail checks to:** Advanced Gift and Record James Madison University  
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Harrisonburg, VA 2280

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<http://psyc.jmu.edu/school/>

Did we miss someone?  
Please send us **e-addresses** of colleagues who did not receive our newsletter.