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THE FIRST GRADUATE COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY CLASS

The graduate psychology program has officially begun with the ushering in of its first cohort! Class members hail from backgrounds of psychology, healthcare, and management, just to name a few. Students are working toward their M.A. in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in Child & Adolescent or Social Justice Community Counseling. With respect to their personal and professional goals, students also have the option of pursing 48 or 60 credits.

“When it comes to graduate school, I made the right choice,” remarked Lauren Hayles, Graduate Assistant. “Coming to DelVal has given me the opportunity to grow as a professional and a person. There is so much to get involved in and I really feel like I’m making a difference in the campus community.” Professors offer expertise in couples and family counseling, child and adolescent development, and multicultural/diversity issues. “Professors have been with us every step of the way. It’s clear to all of us that their objective is to see us succeed,” says Sean Galiczynski, class member. All members are excited to continue their studies next semester as they start their practicum experiences.

LET’S WELCOME THE NEWEST ADDITION TO THE TEAM!

The Counseling Psychology team would like to extend a warm welcome to Christopher Walter, our new Graduate Clinical Coordinator! Chris is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) holding a M.A. in Counseling and a Certificate in Advanced Graduate Counseling Psychology. He is also certified in Transpersonal Psychotherapy and Transpersonal Breathwork, having completed an international, 3-year training in Freiburg, Germany. Chris has extensive clinical experience working with adolescents, adults, forensic populations, physiological assessment, administration, and clinical supervision.

Currently, Chris has a small private practice in Doylestown where he facilitates transpersonal breath workshops and specializes in the areas of sexuality & sexual behavior, spirituality, trauma resolution, and individuation. Here at DelVal, Chris will focus his talents on the oversight of students’ practicum & internship readiness and placement, monitoring site supervisor credentials, maintenance of paperwork related to internships and graduate program accreditation, and mentoring. Chris prefers to spend free time with his wife and dog, exercising, listening to music, reading, and finding exotic and colorful things to fill the house.
When I was deciding on whether or not I wanted to join the Ghana Institute for the summer of 2013, I asked myself one question: If you don’t go, will you regret that decision in 10 years? The answer was simple: Yes. I knew that pushing myself so far outside my comfort zone, and deciding to participate in such a unique summer program would be something that would change my life and bring me an experience and perspective that my colleagues back at home do not have.

The first week of the program was brutal. I got sick, I had to change homestays because my asthma acted up, and had to communicate with people who spoke a language that had no similarities to English. To call it “culture shock” would be an understatement. And then something changed. I realized that even though I was in such a foreign environment, I had a true opportunity to achieve a mindset and change the lives of community members.

During the final six and a half weeks at the Institute, the time flew by. Not only had I never worked so hard, I had never been so excited to work so hard. I loved my team, and enjoyed working my butt off with my teammate, Will, in order to achieve the goal of our team: Improve the appearance and cleanliness of the community by replacing black plastic bags.

Living in Asakraka, I learned something incredibly basic: the value of human-to-human communication. In a previous blog, I mentioned that modern technology has taken away the daily joys of social interactions by replacing it with text messaging, Facebook, and email. Taking the time to speak face-to-face with people on a daily basis allowed me to become a much more effective communicator and leader. Learning what it takes to choose a compatible team (and seeing how quickly a great team can accomplish lofty goals) is a skill that I will never lose – and if I could do it with people from a different culture, I can definitely do it when the time comes back at home.

I miss my host family and all of the friendships I built in a small amount of time, a direct result of my daily interactions with a vast amount of people. The villagers greeted us with open arms and a general sense of affection unheard of in the Western world. Witnessing the daily grind of the villagers helped me gain a different perspective that will carry me through the rest of my career and life: if people can work so hard, every day, with little or no opportunity to climb up a rung on the socioeconomic ladder, I owe it not only to myself, but to people like them, to seize every chance and opportunity that comes my way, and to face challenges as just that – a challenge, something that I will conquer and keep moving forward, making every day, and every moment impactful.
Attending and presenting at the International Society for Exploring Teaching and Learning (ISETL) conference provided me with an invaluable experience as a student. The teaching philosophies and strategies utilized by the professors gave me a new appreciation for all of my professors at Del Val. I enjoyed attending the different sessions and hearing about the latest trends in higher education from a professors’ perspective. Having the opportunity to interact with passionate professors broadened my perspective on everything from education to careers to global issues.

When it was time for Dr. Cohen and me to give our presentation “Travel Abroad: Fostering Multicultural Competence, Group Cohesion, and Individual Growth” I was not nervous, but rather excited to share my experiences from Semester at Sea. We traveled to six countries throughout Europe in two weeks. Not only did we both explain how much the trip taught us, we also included research that supported the importance of travel on the development of personal identity and a larger worldview.

Looking back on my experience, I feel like I developed a new sense of confidence. I stepped outside my comfort zone, talked with many new people, and presented to a room full of college professors about something I was passionate about. All of this allowed me to grow not only as a student, but as a future professional as well. By the end of the conference, I was beginning to consider a career in higher education for myself! It was such a rewarding experience as a student and I am thankful I had this opportunity.
Moments With Dr. Temple Grandin

The Autistic Brain October 2013
By Lauren M. Hayles

“If great minds think alike, then I can only imagine the potential of the ones that think differently,” was my closing thought after being in the presence of Dr. Temple Grandin. Greatness is not a concept that can be confined by a mere comparison to others. Greatness is often found through clearing paths in a wilderness of unbridled resistance.

“Great to be here today,” were the first words that followed the remaining resonances of applause. As she began her speech on “The Autistic Brain,” It was clear that she could by no means be reduced to a single label of “Autistic.” Dr. Grandin led us through a journey using visual slides of her brain and candid personal stories as scenery. Utilizing her command of charisma and forward thinking, she dispelled myths about Autism and voiced her thoughts about what should be done to help people on the autism spectrum reach their full potential.

As a psychiatric nurse who works closely with children on the spectrum, it was exciting to see the potential futures of the special children I work with. Sometimes I wonder what they will do, who they will become, and how they will develop a self-identity of someone who is more than a “diagnosis.” Seeing them climb their uphill battle can be discouraging, but Dr. Grandin reminded me that at the top of every hill is a plateau; and with the right attitude, hard work, and a fostering environment, their plateau can be one of overflowing achievement and success.

Although Dr. Grandin’s presentation focused on Autism, her words undoubtedly applied to everyone alike. She taught an integral lesson that was deeply inspiring and essential for unleashing the positive potential in everyone. We are all unique individuals who face our own difficulties, disabilities, labels, and stereotypes. I learned that in order to make ourselves better we must use our experiences as assets. Sometimes we should work with them, but in order to build strength, at times it’s necessary to work against them.

“Autism is an Important part of who I am, I wouldn’t want to change it” - Dr. Grandin

President Brosnan, Dr. Grandin, and Dr. Ervin

Let’s Talk About Our Sex...

In collaboration with the Multicultural Forum, The Liberal Arts department sponsored a lecture hosted by Counseling Psychology graduate professor Matthew Mutchler. It was no surprise that Dr. Mutchler’s lecture (entitled Let’s Talk About (Our) Sex: Masculinity Through the Lifespan) brought an overwhelming attendance. Students and faculty alike were challenged to unpack the meaning of “masculinity” and examine topics such as male privilege, stereotypes, sex, and gender. Dr. Mutchler’s presentation encouraged flexibility when defining what it means to be masculine and reminded us to always be mindful of treating yourself and others with dignity.

“You have to have a flexible definition of masculine.”
-Dr. Mutchler
In the beginning of the semester, the Center for Student Professional Development and the Counseling Psychology department hosted a panel of experts for the Counseling Psychology Industry Panel. Experts included Monica Fielder (Director of Behavioral Health and Rehabilitation Services at Foundations Behavioral Health), Audrey Burger (Primary Therapist for the Adolescent unit at Foundations Behavioral Health), Mildred A. Mendez (Director of Individual Advocacy at A Woman’s Place), Armand DiYenno (Deputy Director at The Bucks County Behavioral Health System), Reverdy M. Rhodes (Director of the Foster Care Program at Community Service Foundation & Buxmont Academy), and Sharon Donnelly (Director of Counseling Services at Delaware Valley College).

The panel was held in the library and was open to all students. This experience offered more than the generic takeaways one often finds in a random information search. Experts gave personal and career tips to students to shape the path to their career. Undergraduate Counseling Psychology student, Mindy Reyes, commented, “I even used their tips in a recent interview that I had and got the job. In general, I’m glad I went to the event because I got some practical advice that I will probably use for the rest of my professional career.”

Smile Station

Smile Station is a student club started by counseling psychology majors Sarah Stout and Barbara Krier in 2012. The Smile Station continues to thrive as volunteers bring the gift of company and companionship to the residents of Neshaminy Manor (a long term care facility). Volunteer Barbara Krier (class of 2014) recently represented Neshaminy Manor at a senior expo hosted at DelVal this past October. “It is so rewarding working directly with the residents. They are so appreciative and happy when we visit,” says Barbara. “I always feel enriched when I leave after spending time with the residents.” Barbara plans to continue working with seniors after graduation.