Greetings from the Program

Remember the days of trying to find a job and having to make a case to employers about what a genetic counselor did and how one would benefit their hospital or clinic? Or how about piecing together clinic work to secure a job in the city of your choice? If you have paid attention at all in the last few years this is far from the truth now! Our profession is growing. Genetic counselors are taking on new roles that merge perfectly with our skill set. With this migration from mostly clinical jobs to other arenas, comes an evolution of how we train future genetic counselors. In response to the demand for genetic counselors many programs are increasing class sizes; this past spring we successfully graduated our first class of six students. Additionally, the number of training programs is expected to increase in coming years. A limiting factor to training is rotation sites and clinical supervisors for students. There is thoughtful discussion about how to incorporate innovative methods into clinical training without further burdening our supervisors while maintaining the excellent standards they have set. At UW-Madison, standardized patients are used to help the student practice their developing skills in a low risk setting (see what our current 2nd year student wrote about his time with a standardize patient below). Technology is being used in the classroom to create case-based scenarios, bringing to life examples of common counseling issues. But most of all, the item that is treasured is you and the dedication you have for the future of our profession. This is exemplified when we hear from you about how you meet with prospective students to help them learn about this career, when you complete research to broaden the understanding of our impact in healthcare, or how you are directly involved with the training of future genetic counselors at clinic sites or in the classroom. A sincere thank you from the Program to everyone, near and far, involved in such activities that help support our students. The Program is a success because of your efforts!

On Wisconsin!

Highlights of 2016

- We had a record number of applicants this past spring (188!!). We interviewed 39 and 6 were accepted. We welcome the Class of 2017: Amy Donahue, Eden Faye, Ellen Johnson, Sharon Luu, Jonica Richards, and Jessica Tarnowski. Thus far they have been impressive,
Highlights...continued from page 1

• Since 2010, 96% of graduates have passed the national certification exam; the national average is 80-85%.

• This past year we said good bye to one medical director and hello to another. Dr. Phil Giampietro has taken a new job with St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Pennsylvania. He served as the Program's Medical Director since 2009. He provided valuable classroom instruction for our GC students in the Academic Methodologies class and Medical Genetics. We miss Dr. G and wish him the best! Dr. Elizabeth Petty, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs with the UW-SMPH, has taken on the role of our new Medical Director. This is not a new role for her; she was the Medical Director the University of Michigan program previously. Although Badgers and Wolverines may have their differences, the spirit is the same and Dr. Petty, for certain, embraces it!

• Research from the class of 2015 and 2016 includes one published paper, two posters and a presentation at the AEC, a “white paper” used in ongoing IRB discussions regarding research genetic testing and a legacy project for a current student. Consistent with our Program mission to think critically and engage in research, it is great to see so many UW grads with published papers from the past year.

• The proposal to transition the program completely to the SMPH for all academic and administrative functions was approved and was effective this Fall 2016. With that, the degree title has changed. Future graduates will be conferred the Master of Genetic Counselor Studies.

• The Adam's Hope Perinatal Bereavement Conference expanded this fall to reach a broader audience thanks to the generous support of Adam's parents-Bob and MaryAnne Rennebohm. The program reaches students at the University of Wisconsin, the University of Minnesota and Northwestern University. This year, it included students either in person or via distance education with Ohio State University, Case Western Reserve University, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, the University of Pittsburgh, Indiana State University, University of Pittsburgh, University of Arkansas Medical Sciences, Boston University School of Medicine, and University of Texas.

• Donations to the Genetic counselor Award Fund allowed us to maintain our annual scholarship to the class of 2017 at $1500 per student. It is so wonderful to see so much support from our graduates; thank you for donating to the fund!

Open House: Master of Genetic Counselor Studies

We hosted our 4th Annual Open House and had record attendance! This event provides an opportunity for prospective applicants to learn more about a career as a genetic counselor. We have three panel discussions led by families impacted by genetic disease, genetic counselors, and genetic counseling students. The Master Genetic Counselor Series (found on www.nsgc.org) are viewed and provide a framework for group discussion.

Thank you to all who participated in this conference. The Program hosts this event annually, typically in the late summer. Additionally, we host similar, but smaller, gatherings throughout the academic year. Thank you for spreading awareness of our growing profession and guidance to the prospective applicant. The time you give to interested students is priceless.

Dr. Laxova with Jenny Rietzler and Brianna Nelson, two recipients of the scholarship named in her honor.

Casey Reiser, April Hall, Christina Zaleski, Angie Thompson, Craig Adamski, Laura Birkeland.

Open house Guests.
Students participate is a wide range of experiences while training to become genetic counselors, some of which are required for all and others that are uniquely sought out by the student.

**Standardized Patients Used in Training – by Everett Lally, Class 2017**

The standard patient experience is the perfect way to practice genetic counseling skills in a safe environment. Roleplaying between students is second best but can be a challenge throughout the semester due to limited time, scheduling conflicts, not to mention the difficulty of embracing both sides of the counseling dynamic in an effective, serious, and unbiased manner. In this regard, the standard patient experience feels more authentic than a typical roleplay while simultaneously providing a safe area to experiment and receive real time feedback from multiple perspectives, both behind a mirror, video monitor, or from the patients themselves. Although this unique situation can feel daunting as a student, the opportunities for growth are immeasurable. In the end, experimentation in this setting may very well lead to instant success but also, any failure represents the ability to start again, so as to become wiser and smarter.

**Genetic Counseling in London – by Madeline Pies, Class 2017**

The summer of 2016, I had my Cancer clinical rotation at Guy’s Hospital in London, England. This also was a part of an Independent Study learning about a different healthcare system, namely the National Health Service (NHS). I was able to observe and provide counseling alongside genetic counselors as well as consultants (physicians). The genetic counseling I observed and practiced is much the same, but the testing and screening that is offered is based on National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidelines. This means that for breast cancer for example, the testing offered most looks for gene changes in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes. Although NICE Guidelines set their own guidelines, hospitals like Guy’s can perform service evaluations to extend testing to a larger group of individuals to help provide evidence for more inclusive criteria. This demonstrated to me how the guidelines themselves are adjusted. It is interesting to consider that inclusion of some genes but not others in the testing strategy in the NHS is based on the same evidence for which we offer panels here in the United States. In my experience, that shows a level of fairness in the NHS that is not present in the United States. However, in being fair, there are differences such as waiting times for test results, and a greater chance there is a change in another gene predisposing a family to certain types of cancer. My time in London enriched my experience in genetic counseling and in culture. More importantly, it gave me greater perspective when considering the role that health systems and guidelines play in our profession.

**Lab Based Genetic Counseling – by Camille Fisher, Class 2017**

For my summer rotation, I had the opportunity to further explore my interest in laboratory genetic counseling. As a genetic counseling intern with Prevention Genetics I gained a variety of valuable experience. Working closely with the counselors, I was able to follow patient samples from their arrival at the lab all the way through to the interpretation and calling out of results. Being on site in Marshfield, Wisconsin allowed me to observe and participate in a range of company activities. I was afforded the opportunity to sit in on meetings with the research and development team, variant interpretation teams, a variety of special project teams and many others. As a part of my final project with Prevention Genetics, I participated in developing a marketing strategy for DNA banking services through the laboratory.

My summer experiences continued with a trip to Salt Lake City, Utah for a brief internship with Myriad Genetics, a diagnostic testing laboratory specializing in cancer genetics. During my time at Myriad, I met genetic counseling students from all over the United States and Canada. This was a great opportunity to make connections with a fabulous group of future genetic counselors. In addition to learning more about general testing strategy and the process of variant interpretation at Myriad, I had the opportunity to interview and observe genetic counselors working for the company. Several of these counselors held management positions and many were involved in research and other special projects. Overall, these experiences have given me a greater understanding of the many emerging and diverse roles of genetic counselors.
Medical Spanish – by Laura Dattilo, Class 2016

During the spring semester, Jenny Rietzler and I took a course entitled Medical Spanish for Health Science Students. The class met weekly and focused on communicating in Spanish in the medical setting. Jenny and I were both Spanish majors in our undergraduate careers and spent time abroad, however we felt that our skills were declining with disuse. Our classroom activities included learning vocabulary words for different organ systems, discussing cultural differences that may impact how Spanish-speaking patients use the medical system, and role-playing “interview” sessions with volunteer patients. The course offered us an outlet to once again utilize our Spanish skills and provided us with practice using them in a medical setting. As genetic counselors we will likely encounter Spanish-speaking patients and understanding their culture and language will enable us to better serve them, even if there is a translator in the room. In addition to the focus on patient communication, this course allowed us to meet graduate students from other health science programs and foster inter-professional relationships. I am incredibly grateful for this experience and would encourage other UW genetic counseling students with a Spanish background to take advantage of it.

Mayo Medical Laboratory Internship – by Sara Zoran, Class 2016

All first year GC Interns completed the academic year with a brief internship at Mayo Medical Labs in Rochester, MN to gain understanding of lab genetic counselor roles, a growing niche in the field of genetic counseling. Two GC Interns were immersed into the GC responsibilities in either the Biochemical Genetics Lab, Cytogenetics Lab or, in my case, the Personalized Genomics and Pharmacogenomics Lab. We evaluated the appropriateness of testing, participated in simulated phone calls to providers to discuss appropriateness of testing and results, designed a gene panel for hereditary hemorrhagic telangiectasia, evaluated a molecular variant using databases and the American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG) guidelines, and interpreted pharmacogenomics results. We concluded our internship with presentations on our experience, using specific case examples as illustration. Throughout the week, it became very clear how GC skill sets are applied in the lab setting and how lab GCs influence patient care. Personally, this experience filled in knowledge gaps caused by absence from this field for two decades which witnessed significant advances. Finally, there is not enough space to write about our two fabulous GC mentors: Michelle Kluge and Kate Kotzer. They are GC Rock Stars! Other extracurricular accomplishments worth mentioning are learning how to confidently navigate the underground tunnels at Mayo in search of coffee and enjoying free time with my wonderfully spirited and talented classmates.

The Center for Patient Partnerships – by Jenny Rietzler, Class 2016

Alongside my prenatal clinical rotation experience at Meriter Hospital this past summer, I also had the opportunity to spend two days a week working as a student patient advocate at the Center for Patient Partnerships (informally known as the CPP). The CPP is a small, not-for-profit organization nestled within UW-Madison’s very own Law School building on Bascom Hill. Drawing on students in the areas of law, pharmacy, social work, medicine, and genetic counseling, the CPP has an interdisciplinary focus that offers free services to those individuals who are diagnosed with life threatening or other chronic health issues, regardless of income or location. Some of the general issues students at the CPP are able to assist individuals with include helping someone learn more about their diagnosis, identifying clinical trials, coordinating support services, insurance matters, and public benefits. Laura Datillo and I had the honor of working with clients one-on-one in order to help them sort through some of the complex navigational issues which surface as a result of our healthcare system. I have learned that there are tremendous sacrifices patients and their family members make for their own healthcare quality in the face of a system that is fragmented. There is no doubt that Laura and I will be carrying this experience with us through our careers as genetic counselors. Along with this summer experience, Laura and I will be taking a course through the CPP in the spring of 2016 in order to complete and receive a Certificate in Consumer Patient Advocacy.

Farewell and Thank You!

A cornerstone of so many graduate’s experience, Mary “Punky” Rassmussen retired Spring of 2016, after 37 years of service in the Biochemical Genetics Clinic. With her fantastic laugh and spirit, she will be missed by so many families, staff and students. In her honor, a fund was set up to give a “Punky Pal” teddy bear to each newborn identified with a metabolic disease on Newborn Screening. Thank you Punky for all your contributions!
Eden Faye - Recipient of the Genetic Counselor Training Program Alumni Scholarship for Leadership

I proudly hail from metropolitan Detroit. In 2013 I graduated from Indiana University with a BS in Psychology and a minor in Biology. Following college, I moved to Chicago to work for non-profit organization Bright Pink. There I had the opportunity to educate women who, like my own family, are at an increased risk for breast and ovarian cancer. Witnessing women make proactive health decisions was inspiring and contributed to my desire to pursue genetic counseling as a profession. In Chicago I served as Chairman of the Associate Board for the Center for Jewish Genetics. This experience amplified my desire to play a support role for individuals navigating difficult health journeys. I am honored to receive the Alumni Scholarship for Leadership and hope to continue my involvement with organizations in Madison and beyond to improve health resources. In my free time, I like to play and coach ultimate Frisbee, hang out with my cats, and try craft beers with my spouse. I’m honored and excited to come to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and am extremely grateful to be receiving the Joan Burns Founder’s Scholarship! Like Ms. Burns, I am passionate about helping people navigate both the emotions and the science of genetic diagnoses, and I hope to continue her legacy of being a leader in genetic counseling education and a champion for the profession.

Amy Donahue – Recipient of the Joan Burns Founder’s Scholarship

I’ve lived in 14 towns/cities in 8 different states, but Milwaukee has been my home for the past 5 years. I received my BA degree from Grinnell College in 2005 (Mathematics/Russian double major), and got my Master of Library and Information Sciences degree from the University of Washington-Seattle in 2007. Due to a combination of factors, including my family members’ experience as healthcare professionals, my own work as a medical librarian on an interdisciplinary clinical team, and personal experience with loved ones’ terminal illnesses, I eventually discovered genetic counseling, a career I had briefly considered in high school. To get the necessary background, I attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for a BS degree in Biological Sciences, graduating in May 2016. While there, I participated in research (my projects included looking at pleiotropic gene variants and experiments on the efficacy of a potential cancer treatment) and had a student job as a peer mentor supporting other non-traditional students from a variety of backgrounds. In my free time, I like to play and coach ultimate Frisbee, hang out with my cats, and try craft beers with my spouse. I’m honored and excited to come to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and am extremely grateful to be receiving the Joan Burns Founder’s Scholarship! Like Ms. Burns, I am passionate about helping people navigate both the emotions and the science of genetic diagnoses, and I hope to continue her legacy of being a leader in genetic counseling education and a champion for the profession.

Sharon Luu – Recipient of the Dr. Renata Laxova Scholarship in Patient Advocacy

I have lived all over the map but mostly grew up in the suburbs of Rochester, NY. I graduated in 2014 from the University of Cincinnati with a B.S. in Architecture. In college, I mentored other students as a resident advisor and volunteered extensively in various venues, including low-income schools, emergency rooms, and global health programs. These experiences combined with my own difficult coming-of-age helped me realize that what mattered to me most was the well-being of the people around me. A friend suggested genetic counseling, which piqued my curiosity in pathology but most of all, appealed to my desire to make a positive impact in my community. After earning my architecture degree, I returned home for a job in fiber optic design but simultaneously transitioned my career. While working, I also studied biology at SUNY Geneseo, volunteered with adults with developmental disabilities, and shadowed at local clinics. I have had tremendous support, for which I consider myself extremely lucky, and this has further reinforced my desire to become a genetic counselor. As the recipient of the Dr. Renata Laxova Scholarship, I hope to use my love for service and sense of compassion to help patients through what can be the most emotional moments in medicine. In my free time, I enjoy long-distance running, playing the piano, and singing dramatic musical theater numbers when no one is around. I am thrilled to return to the Midwest to join UW’s Genetic Counseling Program Class of 2018!

Ellen Johnson - Recipient of the Dr. Richard Pauli Scholarship in Clinical Research

I grew up in the small town of Alexandria, Minnesota before attending the University of Minnesota-Duluth, where I received my Bachelors of Applied Science in Psychology in 2015. As a student I was an avid sousaphone player in the UMD Marching Band, a university chemistry tutor, and an advocate at a local domestic violence shelter. My interest in genetic counseling grew from a love of genetics and newfound interest in providing education and support to those around me. I was a research assistant within my undergraduate psychology department, and also had the opportunity to develop, conduct, and present my own research project examining the relationship between musical education and coordination. After graduation I began working as a member of Ofstead & Associates, an interdisciplinary group of researchers dedicated to conducting real-world studies of healthcare systems and processes to improve patient outcomes. Participating in different research roles and responsibilities has encouraged me to think critically while also maintaining curiosity regarding the world around me, and I am incredibly grateful to receive the Dr. Richard M. Pauli Scholarship in Clinical Research. I hope to forward Dr. Pauli's goal of incorporating critical thinking into my education and furthering collaboration among researchers to better patient care.

Ellen Johnson - Recipient of the Dr. Richard Pauli Scholarship in Clinical Research

I grew up in the small town of Alexandria, Minnesota before attending the University of Minnesota-Duluth, where I received my Bachelors of Applied Science in Psychology in 2015. As a student I was an avid sousaphone player in the UMD Marching Band, a university chemistry tutor, and an advocate at a local domestic violence shelter. My interest in genetic counseling grew from a love of genetics and newfound interest in providing education and support to those around me. I was a research assistant within my undergraduate psychology department, and also had the opportunity to develop, conduct, and present my own research project examining the relationship between musical education and coordination. After graduation I began working as a member of Ofstead & Associates, an interdisciplinary group of researchers dedicated to conducting real-world studies of healthcare systems and processes to improve patient outcomes. Participating in different research roles and responsibilities has encouraged me to think critically while also maintaining curiosity regarding the world around me, and I am incredibly grateful to receive the Dr. Richard M. Pauli Scholarship in Clinical Research. I hope to forward Dr. Pauli’s goal of incorporating critical thinking into my education and furthering collaboration among researchers to better patient care.
In 2012, a group of us genetic counselors working in the laboratories at Mayo Clinic formed an initiative to address the lack of professional development and education opportunities for the ever growing sub-specialty of laboratory genetic counselors. From this initiative grew the idea and eventual realization of the recently published book, *Practical Genetic Counseling in the Laboratory*. My co-editors, Brittany Thomas and Teresa Kruisselbrink, and I are very proud to announce this upcoming text and the end result of a very collaborative process.

The book is the first to organize the theory and practice of laboratory genetic counseling in an accessible and comprehensive format. When forming the initial concept for the project, the major limitation we faced was the lack of any published or established standards within the lab GC specialty. In order to address this challenge, almost all chapters were written by two to three authors, with much care given that all types of laboratories were represented, from commercial labs to small academic labs to large reference labs. In the end, the book has contributions from 37 laboratorians, geneticists, and genetic counselors from more than 30 institutions. And by chance, although not a surprise, University of Wisconsin-Madison alumni are well represented amongst the authors.

Highlights includes:

- **Technological details, clinical nuances and interpretation of results**, including those specific to biochemical genetics, cytogenetics, molecular genetics, and prenatal screening.
- **Practical guidelines for test utilization, education and training in the laboratory, test development, and laboratory case management**.
- **Considerations related to counseling skills, ethical dilemmas, contributions to research**, and sales and marketing.

The book is currently available for pre-order on Amazon as well as directly from Oxford University Press, expected out in March of 2017. Wisconsin alumni are encouraged to enter the promotional code, AMPROMD9, for 30% off when purchased directly from Oxford. Our goals for this text are to provide a resource and reference for both veteran and new genetic counselors in the laboratory setting as well as the promotion of education regarding the lab GC specialty in the genetic counseling field.
Graduation

This spring of 2016, we graduated our first class of six students. Almost all secured employment prior to graduation, taking clinical, lab-based and public health roles. Their research project presentation was well attended by staff, faculty and families.

- **Hallee Adamsheck.** **Low FMR1 CGG Repeat Length in Males is Associated with Family History of BRCA-Associated Cancers.** Project Advisors: Elizabeth Petty, MD and Marsha Mailick, PhD

- **Laura Dattilo.** **Transitioning Youth with Medium Chain Acyl-CoA Dehydrogenase Deficiency (MCADD): A Survey of Parental Opinions.** Project Advisor: Jessica Scott Schwoerter, MD

- **Sarah Clowes Candadai.** **Disorders of Propionate Metabolism in Old Order Wisconsin Amish.** Project Advisors: Jessica Scott-Schwoerter, MD and Patrice Held, PhD

- **Jordan Elliott.** **Health Care Access in Wisconsin Amish and Old Order Mennonite Populations: A Comparative Study.** Project Advisors: Christine Seroogy, MD and Anne Harris, PhD

- **Jenny Rietzler.** **Growing Visibility: An Exploration of How Pregnancy (and Parenthood) Influences the Perspectives and Practices of a Prenatal Genetic Counselor.** Project Advisors: Elizabeth Petty, MD and Laura Birkeland, MS, CGC

- **Sara Zoran.** **Multiple Perspectives about Whole Exome Sequencing/Whole Genome Sequencing: A Systematic Review of the Literature.** Project Advisor: Audrey Tluczek, PhD, RN

---

Jordan Elliott, Sara Zoran, Jenny Rietzler, Casey Reiser, Laura Dattilo, Hallee Adamsheck, Sarah Clowes-Candadai

Dr. Elizabeth Petty, Casey Reiser

Dr. Renata Laxova, Dr. Raymond Kessel

Sonja Henry, Joan Burns
Alumni Updates

Please consider sharing professional and personal updates by emailing Laura Birkeland at lebirkeland@pediatrics.wisc.edu

Donna Mihm (1980) claims to not have any major updates when asked by the Program, but volunteers that she has been traveling this past year or so to some “local” hotspots: Tahiti, Scotland, the Galapagos Islands and Drumheller, Alberta (Royal Tyrrell Dinosaur Museum). Here she is visiting with favorite classmate, Casey Reiser (1980).

Kathy Morris (1981) showed us who’s got talent at the “GCs Got Talent” show hosted by the Genetic Support Foundation at AEC this past fall. Check out her rendition of “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” genetics style on YouTube (https://youtu.be/tFbupuGDPFU) or on our Facebook page. Impressive is not a strong enough word for what you will find there.

Kristal (Hagemoser) Platt (1987) writes to us: “I have been at Boys Town National Research Hospital for nearly fourteen years where I see primarily hearing loss and craniofacial patients with my GC hat. As Vision Program Coordinator, I also develop programs for families who have children with vision loss. Due to my professional and personal interest in vision disorders, I have been interacting with an informal group of ophthalmic GCs. I recently sent an email on the NSGC ListServe to gauge the interest in an informal or formal group of GCs who specialize in hearing loss. Depending upon the level of interest, I may propose a Sensory Disorders SIG (special interest group) through NSGC. Please contact me at Kristal.platt@boystown.org or 402-498-6365 if you specialize in seeing patients who are deaf or hard of hearing and may be interested in connecting. If you work in the ophthalmic arena, please join us in our group; I can help connect you as well.”

Margo Grady (1993) worked as a prenatal genetic counselor for over 20 years at Meriter Hospital but has now moved into the cancer counseling arena working as a clinical genetic counselor with ProHealth Care – UW Cancer Center. Her dedication to student supervision will continued to be put to use as she has agreed to maintain her connection with the UW Program but now supervising a Cancer Rotation.

Connie Schultz (1994) joined the team at PreventionGenetics in a lab-based position. Connie also worked as a prenatal genetic counselor and provided great mentorship to many UW GC students during their training. Thank you Connie!!

Melisa Siegler (1994) is moving from the clinical world to work as a Senior Genetic Counselor serving the Exome Clinical Abstracting/Customer Service Program at GeneDx. Melisa also worked as a prenatal genetic counselor, and like Margo and Connie, she also was a valued supervisor for our UW GC students. Thank you Melisa!!

Peggy Modaff (1995) was promoted to Distinguished Genetic Counselor. This is no surprise, of course, as she is one top-notch lady with expert clinical and supervisory skills within the UW Genetic Program.

Amy Stettner (1997) cancer genetic counselor extraordinaire, has taken her career to the next level working as an Inherited Cancer Genetic Counselor with GeneDx. She will be missed as a second year clinical supervisor in cancer genetics, but luckily she will continue to teach Cancer Genetics to the students. It was great to see her at AEC presenting her research project “Fanconi Anemia Type Solid Tumors in FA Heterozygotes Identified via Inherited Cancer Gene Testing.”

Quinn Stein (2000) received the Strategic Leader Award at AEC this fall! He always seems to have some “strategy” up his sleeve...

Beth Wood Denne (2000) writes to us the following: “I remain at Counsyl and am now serving at the Director of Genetic Counseling Services. I am finishing up my 4th, and final year, on ABGC’s Board of Directors and served as President in 2016. As an Advisory Board member for The University of Maryland’s Genetic Counseling Training Program, I was proud to have my UW classmate, Quinn Stein, in town to serve as the graduation speaker for Maryland’s program this past Spring. And, it was wonderful to see so many Wisconsin alums in action at the AEC this year (big Kudos to Jay Flanagan for Chairing the whole sha-bang!) The Class of 2000, minus only 1, reunited at this year’s reunion (Nancy Hsu Palmer, Quinn Stein, Allison B. Spitale, and myself.... we were missing Kara Reynolds).”
Susan Hancock (2001) moved back to Wisconsin (take that Californial) working as a Medical Science Liaison with Counsyl.


Amy White (2002) presented at ACMG this past spring in Tampa, “An Unexpected Reversal of Roles: The Increasing Need for Biochemical Genetics Testing to Validate Large Scale Genomic Testing.” Amy is now working remote as a Biochemical genetic counselor at Mayo Medical Laboratory.

Melissa Baraboo (2003) hosted a genetics cookie bake-off! She makes a mean Oreo truffle, but watch out for Lindsay Zetzsche’s rum balls.

Regan Veith (2005) has moved from the dairy-land of Wisconsin with Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin and taken a new position with Children’s Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota working in the new Whole Exome Clinic. You betcha!

Kate Murphy Orland (2008) appreciated being on the NSGC Nominating Committee this past election cycle and states that this was a challenging role given the highly qualified applicants, but insightful to learn about the inner workings of NSGC.

Emily (Windsor) Decker (2008) is now working for Invitae as a Genetic Counselor in Clinical Consultation. If you call Invitae with a clinical/technical question during West Coast hours, there is a pretty good chance you’ll get Emily on the phone or another UW grad, Scott Michalski (2001). As she told the program, they reminisce together about Greenbush donuts in between clinician calls. Her classmate, Kate Murphy-Orland (2008), photobombs her in this picture while working at AEC.

Kristen (Meddaugh) Rasmussen (2004) left her clinical role at Marshfield Clinic and is now working remotely for Mayo Laboratories in their new Whole Exome Sequencing Lab!

Jay Flanagan (2005) did a great job as co-chair for AEC in Pittsburgh last year and Chair at Seattle this fall. Other updates include that he was elected to the NSGC board and he served as an Expert Medical Panel member (most recent blog http://www.nsgc.org/p/bl/et/blogid=53). I can hear him now, “Just another UW grad doing what needs to be done.”

Kimberly Anderson (2009) had a poster at AEC to show off her mad teaching skills, “Harnessing the Potential of Online and Blended Learning in Graduate Education Programs.”

Craig Adamski (2010) left his clinical role at Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin to start a new job as a Medical Science Liaison with Progenity, Inc. He lets us know that he loves working remotely, but says that it does change the dynamic of having a student job shadow!

Megan Nelson (2010) joined the team at PreventionGenetics in Marshfield, WI, working as a Laboratory Genetic Counselor. Her last two jobs still have vacancies if anyone wants to move up north!

Erin Borchardt (2014) has left the great state of Wisconsin and now is working with Laura (Thorson) Brezeskiewicz (2009) at Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers in Colorado who is glad to have her onboard!

Shelby (Sieren) Romoser (2015) presented the abstract from her research project at the 2016 APHL Newborn Screening and Genetic Testing Symposium (NBSGTS) in St. Louis, MO. Her research project was published (see below), she is gainfully employed as a Pediatric Genetic Counselor at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

Hallee Adamsheck (2016) presented her research project, “Low FMR1 CGG Repeat Length in Males is Associated with Family History of BRCA-Associated Cancers” at AEC this past fall and it has been submitted for publication.

Jennifer Rietzler (2016) had her research project presented as a posted at AEC this past fall, too. “A Closer Look” – Benefits and Challenges to receiving Obstetric Care in the Workplace as a Pregnant Prenatal Genetic Counselor.”
Many UW graduates are involved with research on some level and we are proud to list out a few publications from 2015 & 2016. Be certain to send us word from your publications!


---

**Alumni Gatherings at the 2015 & 2016 NSGC Annual Education Conference**

Craig Adamski, Quinn Stein, Jay Flanagan, Lior Borvik, Max Wilson.


Aime Agather, Laura Otto, Meghan Grow, Brianna Nelson, Amy Stettner, Laura Birkeland.

Lindsey Zetzsche, Kyna Byerly, McKinsey Goodenberger, Laura Birkeland.

Stefanie Dugan and Emily Decker.

Lindsey Zetzsche, Sara (Kravel) Fisher, Amy (Mach) Schoenebeck.

Heidi Nagel, Casey Reiser.

Cee Fairley, Casey Reiser, Allison (Brennan) Spitale.

Kathleen O’Hanlon, Sara (Svendsen) Lewis (and husband), Susan (Tomc) Wood, Krital (Hagemoser) Platt.
Your gift to the Genetic Counseling Masters Program Award Fund will help us fulfill our mission of training competent and compassionate genetic counselors who will be lifelong learners and leaders in the field.

This fund was created to support the genetic counseling master’s program. It will provide tuition assistance that will allow students to choose the University of Wisconsin-Madison for their graduate training in genetic counseling.

Genetic counselors help individuals and families sort through critical health issues. In a rapidly expanding field, they play an increasing role in research and public health. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Genetic Counseling Master’s Program is committed to preparing genetic counselors who will help families and help shape the future of genomic medicine.

Gifts to the Genetic Counseling Masters Program Award Fund are administered through the University of Wisconsin Foundation, the official fundraising and gift-receiving organization for the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Make a Gift

Your gift to the Genetic Counseling Masters Program Award Fund will help us fulfill our mission of training competent and compassionate genetic counselors who will be lifelong learners and leaders in the field.

This fund was created to support the genetic counseling master’s program. It will provide tuition assistance that will allow students to choose the University of Wisconsin-Madison for their graduate training in genetic counseling.

Genetic counselors help individuals and families sort through critical health issues. In a rapidly expanding field, they play an increasing role in research and public health. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Genetic Counseling Master’s Program is committed to preparing genetic counselors who will help families and help shape the future of genomic medicine.

Gifts to the Genetic Counseling Masters Program Award Fund are administered through the University of Wisconsin Foundation, the official fundraising and gift-receiving organization for the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Stay in Touch!

We would love to hear from you. Please stay in touch via:

UW Genetic Counselor Training Program Alumni
www.med.wisc.edu/gc
reiser@pediatrics.wisc.edu OR lebirkeland@pediatrics.wisc.edu
Waisman Center, 1500 Highland Ave, Madison, WI 53705
608-262-9722

Genetic counselors help individuals and families sort through critical health issues. In a rapidly expanding field, they play an increasing role in research and public health. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Genetic Counseling Master’s Program is committed to preparing genetic counselors who will help families and help shape the future of genomic medicine.

Gifts to the Genetic Counseling Masters Program Award Fund are administered through the University of Wisconsin Foundation, the official fundraising and gift-receiving organization for the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

To make a gift online, visit www.uwfoundation.wisc.edu

Please make checks payable to University of Wisconsin Foundation and mail to: University of Wisconsin Foundation, US Bank Lockbox, PO Box 78807, Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807. You will receive a receipt for your gift.

To make a gift online, visit www.uwfoundation.wisc.edu