

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2022

THE PARAPHRASE

Official Newsletter of The University of Illinois
Counseling Center Paraprofessional Program



Introduction

BY JOSLIN PECK

This semester already has been quite a busy one for the Counseling Center Paraprofessionals! In this issue, we dive deeper into two important outreach events that took place in the past few months. Both the Eating Disorder Awareness Week and National Screening Day were huge successes and are important to supporting the wellness of the campus community. These events could not be done without the support and involvement of everyone at the Counseling Center and the students who participated in them.

One of the biggest changes we want to share this month is the new Clinical Education Specialist, who serves as the Program Coordinator & Co-Instructor, Rebecca Schlesinger is now in her role. In this issue, we get the privilege of knowing her further. As always, we have included upcoming events and look forward to what the future holds for the program!



This Issue:

Introduction

PAGE 01

Eating Disorders
Awareness Week

PAGE 02

National Screening Day

PAGE 03

Clinical Education
Specialist Spotlight

PAGE 04-05

Upcoming Events

PAGE 05



Eating Disorders Awareness Week

BY KYLE SEMPER



Pictured: CCPs Isabella Portelli and Alex Vilatte tabling at the SDRP.

This February, the Eating Disorders and Disturbances Outreach Team tabled at the SDRP and ISR to spread awareness about eating disorders during National Eating Disorders Awareness Week. The CCPs helped to prepare different materials including a fact sheet and social media posts to spread the word about NEDA week and educate students about eating disorders. Students were asked to answer questions about eating disorders to win a prize. This was a great way to interact with students and help spread awareness about eating disorders. We also want to highlight the upcoming NEDA Walk on April 20, a yearly event that helps raise funds for eating disorders prevention, research, and other forms of support.



National Screening Day

BY GILLIAN VAN NECK

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DANIEL RODRIGUEZ & CHIARA AWATRAMANI

Tuesday, March 1 was National Screening Day. National Screening Day is a time when students can take an anonymous assessment about their alcohol and marijuana consumption habits. The survey results illustrate usage rate patterns within the student population. After the students take the survey, they go over their results with a volunteer and are provided with resources should their results prove concerning. The Counseling Center's Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) prevention team and the Counseling Center Paraprofessional program collaborated to staff this event. The AOD team had a table set up at the event where participants could play two different educational games. The first was a trivia wheel with questions used to educate participants about on-campus resources, safe drug use practices, and to dispel myths related to alcohol and marijuana use. In the second game, students were asked to pour what they thought a standard serving of wine, beer, and a shot of liquor looked like into 3 separate cups and then compared it against the actual measures.

Originally, this event was known as National Alcohol Screening Day, but in recent years, we've added information about marijuana based on consumption rates. In 2020, recreational marijuana became legal in Illinois. However, since the campus is required to follow federal guidelines, marijuana is still not legal to possess on campus, so it's especially important to educate students about policies to ensure they stay legally safe in addition to physically safe. More than 200 participants came to National Screening Day.



Pictured: CCPs MarkAndre Adalin, Daniel Rodriguez, Isabella Portelli, Savannah Sander & Kyle Semper



Clinical Education Specialist Spotlight

BY JOSLIN PECK
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM KATIE HOHE & EVARISTO RIOS

We recently welcomed Dr. Rebecca Schlesinger into the position of Clinical Education Specialist--CCP Program Coordinator & Co-Instructor, and we couldn't be more excited! Schlesinger is a proud alum of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she received her bachelor's in psychology and communications. For graduate school, she attended the University of Akron and got her master's and Ph.D. in counseling psychology. Her main research interests are in LGBTQIA+ folks' experiences with internalized oppression and resilience. Many of her core values stem back to when she was a part of the CCP program. Her passion for mental health prevention, outreach, teaching, and social justice advocacy that she developed during her time as a CCP are why she was drawn to her professional career. She says that her new role is the perfect combination of all of the things she's passionate about! She loves working with some of the most incredible students on campus, and she feels that it is very meaningful to invest in CCPs' professional development and support our campus community's mental health needs.

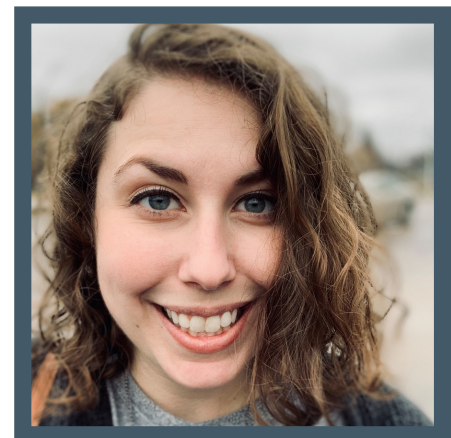
Here are a few questions answered by Dr. Schlesinger:

What are some of your hobbies and/or passions? Things you do for self-care?

I really love to travel. This is something that has been made a little more challenging in the pandemic, but I enjoy trips abroad, across the US, or even just to a neighboring town. To me, it's exciting to see and experience other ways of living that I have never encountered before. I'm also a big foodie. While I wish I had more culinary skills, I enjoy checking out delicious food wherever I go. It can be a greasy spoon or a Michelin Star restaurant. I just love trying new things, especially if it's a must-try dish. Lastly, I am a theater kid at heart. While I haven't performed in quite some time, I enjoy attending plays, musicals, and especially enjoy sketch comedy.

Favorite thing about Illinois as an undergrad or an employee?

When I was an undergraduate student, my favorite parts of campus were definitely the CCP program and my time as an RA in Allen Hall. Both of these experiences were foundational to my personal and professional growth as a mental health provider, preventionist, educator, and activist. As an employee, I would say my favorite part is the students. It's so exciting to be a part of your personal and professional journeys and really pay it forward. I learn a lot from you all and you inspire me to keep growing too.



REBECCA SCHLESINGER, PH.D.
Clinical Education Specialist-
Counseling Center
Paraprofessional Program
Coordinator & Co-Instructor



Clinical Education Specialist Spotlight Cont.

What advice would you give to current CCPs as an alumni of the program?

Something I think about a lot is how can we find ways to lean into discomfort in an accessible way. While not knowing, trying something new, thinking in a new way, hearing a perspective that contrasts ours, can be hard and sometimes scary, it's also the perfect place for growth. The CCP program can be very demanding and I think for alums, life can be really demanding right now. I'd say to find ways to keep growing and stretching while balancing that with some good self-care and support.

Overall, Schlesinger would love to keep building connections within our communities to imagine a world where we can all live in a more just and well society. In the future of her career, she sees herself continuing working in the area of prevention and outreach and continuing to provide community-level interventions on mental health and identity-related topics.

When reflecting on her dream profession, she says that she is lucky to be in her current role of Clinical Education Specialist and Co-Instructor and feels like it is a dream job already. Outside of this, she has a dream of doing sketch comedy and considers it a fun possibility to do on the side. For many years, she has been excited to think about how humor can be used effectively in prevention and outreach work. In the meantime, she says her students are stuck listening to her bad jokes.

We can't wait to see what Dr. Schlesinger does in this role and we are so excited to welcome her to her new position within the Counseling Center Paraprofessional Program!



Pictured: Rebecca Schlesinger and her CCP cohort!

Upcoming Events

Tuesdays @7

- C.O.L.L.E.G.E--The One About Friends
 - March 22, 7pm on Zoom
 - Meeting ID: 868 8797 8896 Password: tues7
- Achieving Wellness Just for the Health of it
 - March 29, 7pm Illini Union 407
- Managing the Harmful Effects of Social Media
 - April 5, 7pm at Lincoln Hall 1022

API Roots discussion about mental health stigma in the Asian Pacific American and Asian International community: March 30, on Zoom time to be determined

National Eating Disorders Awareness Walk: April 23, time and location to be determined

Inner Voices Theatre 25th Anniversary: April 9, Temple Buell Hall time to be determined