Monmouth University graduate student, Rob Chaseman, is recognized by the Department of Psychological Counseling for organizing a musical fundraiser for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Sussex County, NJ. Chaseman, a saxophonist and composer, is a graduate student in the Psychological Counseling program at Monmouth University.

“The project began as part of a requirement in Dr. Jodry’s Wellness in Counseling class during the Summer; each of us were to select an idea for a project to benefit an organization, something we believe in,” said Chaseman. The class then decided on which project to complete as a group. “Although my class selected a different group project than mine, I wanted to continue with organizing the concert” he said.

Chaseman has been a professional musician for over 20 years, and describes his early influences ranging from Duke Ellington to Led Zeppelin. Since he regularly performs at The Stanhope House music club in Stanhope, NJ, he approached them with the idea of hosting the benefit. The Stanhope House was enthusiastic about hosting a concert for NAMI. Next, Rob approached the President of NAMI Sussex, who readily agreed to the idea. NAMI, the nation’s largest grassroots advocacy, education, and support organization for individuals facing mental illness, was an easy choice for Chaseman, who is, himself, in recovery with Bipolar I Disorder with psychotic features. In addition to the musical performances of four different bands, the fundraiser also included a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, and the sale of artwork produced by some consumers of mental health services. Speeches were also given by two NAMI representatives.

Rob’s interest in the intersection of music and mental health has also driven him to produce three CD’s of original music and a forthcoming book on the topic of mental illness and recovery. Rob, with his saxophone, will also perform a live show entitled “Music and Madness, an Introspection on Mental Illness” on Tuesday, February 24, 2015 in Wilson Auditorium. The show is sponsored by the Department of Counseling and Psychological Services at Monmouth University.

Rob Chaseman’s original music is available on iTunes and Spotify.

Congratulations, Rob!
My Internship in Scotland

By Jennifer England

About a year ago, a student did a presentation in one of my classes about her internship experience in Scotland. I was so inspired by this student’s presentation that I became interested in doing something similar. Upon mentioning this to Dr. Hall, she gave me the contact information of the head therapist at Castle Craig Hospital, whom she had met at a conference. After contacting the head therapist, my information was passed along to Dr. Glynis Read, the head of training at Castle Craig Hospital. Shortly after submitting my CV, letter of recommendation, supervision requirements, and completed course descriptions, I received an e-mail from Dr. Read, stating that my internship was approved for the summer of 2014! I spent the next few months preparing for my internship in Scotland, including arranging to Skype into Dr. Jodry’s internship class each week so that my hours could count towards licensure.

On May 25, 2014, I left the United States. The following day I arrived in Edinburgh, Scotland. Tina, one of the drivers from Castle Craig, picked me up from airport. We drove 40 minutes south of Edinburgh, and reached the town of Peeblesshire, which is in the middle of nowhere. We then arrived at Castle Craig Hospital, the drug and alcohol rehabilitation hospital that I would do my internship at. During my first day I settled in and had lunch with the staff at the hospital. The hospital staff were so nice and welcoming. I met my supervisor, Dr. Glynis Read, the following day.

Throughout the three months I was in Scotland, I was able to meet individually with patients, co-facilitate groups, participate in staff meetings, and attend AA and Al-ANON meetings. In addition, I participated in all of the specialty therapies, including art therapy, equine therapy, drumming, acupuncture, and hyperbaric oxygen therapy. I also participated in open professional’s day where I was able to meet mental health professionals from several different countries. The hospital offered staff trainings and I was fortunate to have the opportunity to meet professionals from Finland, Romania and the Netherlands!

I really enjoyed working with professionals from many different countries and having a multicultural experience as part of my internship. In June, I attended the annual reunion in which former patients were invited back for a day of food and fellowship.

I struggled during the first few weeks of my internship, as I was alone in a new country and did not know anyone. It was a big change adjusting to new food, the accent, the time change, and other cultural differences. At times, I also felt like a patient because I was at the hospital the majority of my time. This allowed me to experience a great deal of empathy. I did not drive while in Scotland but I was able to go on Saturday outings with patients and visit many places in Scotland. Since I had so much time to myself, I learned how to be alone with myself. As part of this internship opportunity, I had the ability to work on myself personally. This included going through the 12 steps for myself and working through anxiety issues that arose while I was there. In many ways, I was experiencing what patients go through during treatment. For this reason, I believe that I have truly experienced what Yalom refers to as “fellow travelers.”

“I believe that I have truly experienced what Yalom refers to as “fellow travelers.”
Drugs, Alcohol, & Addiction in Amsterdam:
One Student’s Study Abroad Experience

Monmouth University post-graduate student Lauren Sacs recently participated in a study abroad program in Amsterdam. Along with other mental health professionals from around the world, Lauren had an opportunity to observe some of Holland’s “harm reduction” programs first-hand. Harm reduction is a philosophy in mental health and addictions studies that views abstinence as an outcome not necessarily attainable for all addicts. Given that some addicts will continue to use substances, the goal of harm reduction is to provide the safest possible environment for those who use drugs. An example of harm reduction is offering needle exchanges to heroin addicts in order to decrease the likelihood of HIV or Hepatitis C contamination via used needles.

Lauren is a graduate of Immaculata University with a Master’s degree in Counseling who is completing coursework in Substance Abuse Counseling at Monmouth University. Her ultimate goal is to work as a high school or middle school SAC while teaching part time. During her study abroad experience, Lauren was exposed to a variety of governmental and non-governmental programs related to marijuana use and harm reduction in Amsterdam. She described participation in the marijuana smoke-houses as a program exclusive to Dutch citizens. Members enter the smoke houses via a finger scan on the exterior of the building. Within the smoke houses, only coffee and marijuana are allowed—alcohol and cigarettes are prohibited. The Dutch government requires that smoke houses cannot be near schools and members must be at least 18 years of age.

Lauren also visited a heroin-assisted methadone clinic, where individuals who have not been successful by standard methadone treatment can receive heroin prescriptions for a physician who monitors his or her urine on a daily basis. Lauren also described mobile drug screening, another harm reduction service offered in the Netherlands. Through this service, individuals who purchase street drugs can have the authenticity and strength of the medication chemically tested before use. This can help prevent accidental overdoses. For example, Sacs mentioned a tablet of the club drug “Molly” which was analyzed. The tablet tested at 366mg, a level that if taken would have caused immediate death.

One of the advantages to participating in the study abroad came from interacting with psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, counselors, and social workers representing a variety of different countries.
Erica Lapid, Matthew Tirrell, and Jennifer Trimarchi are not just three passionate and practicing counselors in the field of mental health; they are Monmouth University graduates, and the proud co-founders of Monmouth University Department of Psychological Counseling's Counseling Alumni Connection (CAC). This group was formed with the intention of keeping post graduate students connected to their academic community and invested in the field of counseling. With assistance from their advisor Lisa Harris, this dynamic trio has begun sponsoring workshops, trainings, community outreach events, and networking opportunities held on and off campus, for graduates of the Psychological Counseling program.

In 2012 Erica Lapid was preparing for graduation and the passing of her Counseling Student Association (CSA) presidential torch to Jennifer Trimarchi. “As excited as I was for graduation, I struggled with the reality of leaving such an incredible foundation. I grew into the professional I always aspired to be, but also transformed and developed on a much deeper and personal level. I did not want the journey to end,” says Erica Lapid. With that, and the continued support and encouragement she received from CSA’s advisor, Dr. Joanne Jodry, the idea for forming what is now the CAC was born.

Matthew Tirrell also played an active role in CSA during his time in the Psychological Counseling program by participating in sponsored trainings, trips, and events. Individually, the three had many ideas for creating a group similar to CSA, one that would cater to the specific needs of alumni now practicing in the field. In 2014 they united with this common goal in mind. Shortly thereafter, Lisa Harris was hired as the group’s advisor. Co-founders collectively recall, “That is when all of our ideas really came to fruition.” CAC co-founders and their advisor Lisa Harris continue with weekly planning meetings and late-night correspondences in an effort to organize future events that will draw increasing interest and participation from alumni. “I am so proud to be a part of this team of leaders. I take advantage of every opportunity to promote mental health and wellness and the CAC is the perfect avenue. My hope is that the CAC will inspire other graduates to do the same,” stated co-founder Jennifer Trimarchi.

CAC co-founders agree that changing the world is too big of a job for anyone to do alone. Co-founder Erica Lapid enthusiastically states, “The CAC is the vehicle we have all been waiting for. The formation of this group is proof that Monmouth University’s Psychological Counseling alumni have limitless potential. We don’t just dream of change, we create it.” Dr. Gary Handler, a faculty member, continues to boast that he “is energized by the enthusiasm and motivation of this group of alumni who represent the hopes of current students for exciting careers and opportunities in the mental health field.”

2014 proved to be a noteworthy year for the CAC as evidenced by faculty support and the success of their inaugural Kick-Off Event held in September and the Wellness Workshop hosted in December Lisa Harris continued by stating, “The CAC has gained a lot of positive attention throughout University at large. We are planning an event for the spring and will be partnering with other departments. This is very exciting news for both the CAC and the Department of Psychological Counseling.” The spring event is a presentation by Andy Behrman, author of Electroboy: A Memoir of Mania to be held on Monmouth’s main campus.

When questioned about the success of the CAC Matthew Tirrell said that “None of this would be possible without the support from the faculty within the Department of Psychological Counseling. It has been an absolute privilege to join with them and receive their on-going support. Maintaining connections to fellow alumni, the faculty, and campus community is our mission. Not enough thanks can be offered to the department for supporting the vision and implementation of the CAC.”
Dr. Alan Cavaiola is a Professor and Director of the Addiction Studies track in the Department of Psychological Counseling at Monmouth University. Dr. Cavaiola teaches a variety of courses in the program, including Psychopathology, Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counseling, and Clinical Internship. He is a prolific writer, having authored or co-authored several books, including Impossible to Please: How to Deal with Perfectionistic Coworkers, Controlling Spouses, and other Incredibly Critical People, Toxic Coworkers: How to Deal with Dysfunctional People on the Job, A Practical Guide to Crisis Intervention, and Assessment and Treatment of the DWI Offender. His vast clinical experience working with individuals struggling with addictions and psychiatric crises provides a rich learning opportunity for students in the Psychological Counseling program at Monmouth University.

Dr. Cavaiola has been awarded a sabbatical for the spring 2015 semester in order to pursue several scholarly activities. Most recently, he has co-authored a manuscript entitled “The Impact of Social Support and Attachment Style on Quality of Life and Readiness to Change in a Sample of Individuals Receiving Medication-Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence”. The article, submitted to the prestigious journal Substance Abuse, highlights the preparation for treatment among individuals struggling with opioid dependence, which is a serious problem in the Monmouth County area.

Workplace culture and interpersonal dynamics is an additional research area of Dr. Cavaiola’s. He has proposed a study examining workplace abuse that goes beyond harassment, bullying, or discrimination. Once the study is approved, data collection will begin. Dr. Cavaiola will invite Psychological Counseling graduate students to volunteer for collecting data and scoring questionnaires, providing excellent opportunities for real-world research experience for these students. Eventually, this research will be developed into a book.

The other main projects that Dr. Cavaiola will be working on during his sabbatical involve book projects. Dr. Cavaiola and Dr. Colford (Georgian Court University) are currently in negotiations to write second editions of their crisis intervention textbooks, A Practical Guide to Crisis Intervention (published by Houghton Mifflin) and A Crisis Intervention Case Book (published by Cengage). Their goal is to combine both textbooks into one volume.

Dr. Cavaiola is also co-authoring a book entitled, A Family Guide to Managing Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders in Young Adults. The purpose of the book is to serve as a reference guide for parents and significant others, and other family members who have young adults (ages 19-30) who are experiencing both SUD and mental health disorders. The book is targeted especially to those impacted by the recent heroin epidemic, which is affecting the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states.

Student Spotlight: Christopher Woodside

Christopher Woodside, graduate student in the Department of Psychological Counseling, was named a runner-up in the American Counseling Association’s 2015 Graduate Student Essay Competition. The essay prompt this year was about ethics and how they can be better communicated in the counseling field. Chris will be recognized at ACA’s upcoming annual conference in March. Congratulations Chris!
Alumni Spotlights

Javier F. C. Pérez, ’13

Currently, Javier is an advanced doctoral candidate in The Pennsylvania State University’s Counselor Education and Supervision program. The program at Penn State prepares future counselor educators to be active as researchers, practitioners, counselor education leaders, and competent instructors. In addition to the curricular requirements of the program, Javier is also a senior member of a research team implementing a school-wide ecological anti-bullying program, the assistant coordinator of the training clinic’s pilot Internship Program and one of its intern counselors, and lead contributor for the departmental newsletter. His research interests include pedagogy within counselor education, the impact of leadership empowerment with youth in conflict with the school system, and collaborations in race-based dialogues and service delivery to the underrepresented.

Gabriel Stanziano, ’14

Currently, Gabe is in a doctoral program for Clinical Psychology at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. His time at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine has so far been everything he had hoped for and more. Gabe’s first trimester is successfully completed and it opened his eyes to several new research ideas. He has not yet began dissertation work, but an interest in co-occurring symptoms and misdiagnosis in Sleep Disorders, Psychotic Disorders, and Epilepsy developed as a result of a Behavioral Medicine course he took. In addition to learning a great deal in his courses, Gabe is currently employed as a lab assistant in the Biomedical Sciences department at the college. At the moment, he is working with his lab supervisor to edit an article to be published in a school newsletter. In addition to expanding his writing and editing skills, Gabe hopes to gain knowledge about the field of neuroscience, which is an area of interest of his.

Diandra Prescod, ’11

Diandra applied to doctoral programs and started as a first year doctoral student at the University of Central Florida. On May 2, 2014 she graduated with a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision. This fall she started her appointment as an Assistant Professor in a Clinical Mental Health Program at a university in Texas.
Counseling Scene

CSA Highlights:
- In October, CSA hosted a meet and greet event
- In November, CSA held a Gestalt Therapy workshop

Upcoming CSA Events:
- Wednesday, February 4th, 3-4pm: ACA Greet and Meet (location TBA)
- Sunday, March 1st, 10am-3pm: Qigong Workshop (location TBA)
- Sunday, April 26th, 9am-1pm: Psychodrama Workshop (location TBA)

Graduate students must RSVP to csa@monmouth.edu for all CSA events.

Chi Sigma Iota Honor Society (CSI)

Upcoming CSI Events:
- Sunday, February 15th, 11am-2pm: Assertiveness Training (location TBA)
- Sunday, April 12th, 2-5pm: CSI Annual Induction Ceremony (location TBA)
- Saturday, May 16th, 9am: CSI will be walking in the 2015 NAMIWalks New Jersey event at the Seaside Park Boardwalk. NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Counseling Alumni Connection (CAC)

CAC Highlights:
- September 20th: CAC hosted their Kick-Off Event
- December 6th: CAC hosted a Wellness Workshop

Upcoming CAC Events:
- Saturday, February 21st, 5-8pm: Sips & Serendipity painting workshop at The Majestic Hotel in Ocean Grove. Please RSVP by February 5th to Lisa Harris at lharris@monmouth.edu or 732-923-4572.
Welcome to our department's newsletter! We are excited to share with our Monmouth community the many events, projects, and activities in which our faculty and students are involved. For over 5 years now it has been my privilege to lead a group of highly dedicated and accomplished faculty members who teach about 300 of our students every semester. Although our program is about 20 years old, it is in the last 10 years or so that we have seen the most explosive growth, culminated by accreditation by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) of our flagship degree, the MS in Mental Health Counseling - the first such degree in NJ and the first in the state to receive such accreditation. It is most heart-warming to see the success of our department in educating generations of future mental health professionals. Over the years, we have developed close working relationships with many professional agencies who provide field placement opportunities for our students, and it is even more rewarding to see that many of those agencies are extensively (and sometimes exclusively) staffed by our graduates. Our students also consistently score above national means for CACREP-accredited programs on most measures of relevant knowledge (for example, on the professional counselor licensing examination), so we have much to be proud of.

We are an active department. Our two student organizations - Counseling Student Association as well as our chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (the honor society for students in counselor education programs) - frequently organize programs which benefit not only our department but often aim to assist and involve others. These include speaking engagements by noted mental health experts, charity drives for those in need, and assistance to our community - for example, in the aftermath of hurricane Sandy. Our newly-formed Alumni Organization helps keep our graduates in touch and furthers their continued education through meetings, lectures on important topics (like the new edition of the DSM diagnostic system), and informal get-togethers to compare notes about their developing professional lives. Professors in many of our courses also organize a variety of events, some of which are open to the Monmouth community. Thus, we hope that this newsletter will not only help us tell everyone who we are and what we do, but also encourage faculty and students throughout Monmouth to join us in the many activities we organize to help further the education of mental health professionals and increase knowledge about, and awareness of, mental health matters.