



# Alumni News

## Letter from Nancy and Sonja

We hope that you enjoy this *second* edition of the UNCG MS Genetic Counseling Program newsletter. The newsletter has grown from 4 pages last year to 12 pages this year, thanks to your enthusiasm for submitting updates about your professional and personal accomplishments. It is our hope that the newsletter will become a vehicle for highlighting the accomplishments of our graduates and helping program alumni stay in touch and for providing you with updates about the program.

Hearing about your professional accomplishments is very exciting. We are pleased to know that our graduates are enjoying their work and making important contributions to their patients and the genetics commu-

nity. We are also glad to hear your personal news, and offer you our sincere congratulations on these happy events.

This May we will graduate our 10<sup>th</sup> class of students for a total of 81 graduates! The years have gone by very quickly. As always, we feel privileged to have worked with each of you during your time in the program. Perhaps you recall hearing about the program's "cooperative learning environment" when you first interviewed at UNCG. What that means to us is that learning in this program is a two-way process. Over the years we have learned much from our students and graduates, and we used this knowledge to continue to improve the program. In this way, the success of the program is a reflection of each of you, just as your professional accomplishments are a nice reflection on the program.

The program continues to attract a large number of qualified applicants, a growing number of whom tell us of contacts they have had with program alumni through shadowing or internship experiences.



Our new sign— a gift from the class of 2010

Our graduates continue to be one of the best "marketing" tools for the program – and we thank you for talking with potential applicants about UNCG.

In this issue of the newsletter we have begun to add updates from our program's clinical supervisors. This is in recognition of the relationships that our students develop with their supervisors, and the very significant role they play in your training. We hope that you enjoy these updates and the opportunities to continue these relationships.

Over the past few years, our students have made good use of the funds in our "Genetic Counseling Program Student Enrich-

ment Fund" to support their Capstone Projects. Some students have been able to offer small participation incentives, something they are not able to do with the funds provided by the Graduate Student Association. We hope that you will consider making a donation to this fund in recognition of our 10<sup>th</sup> graduating class (see details on page 2). Sonja enjoyed seeing so many of you at the recent NSGC meeting, and Nancy was sorry that she could not be there. We always enjoy hearing from you – so please continue to stay in touch. There is a large bulletin board at 119 McIver Street where we keep all of the lovely photos that you send our way during the holidays!

### In This Issue:

- "We have a lot to offer" by Tomi Toler
- "Making a difference" by Kelly Schoch
- Professional Updates
- Congratulations!



## We have a lot to offer by Tomi Toler (2009)

Following my 2009 graduation from UNCG, I was lucky enough to obtain a position practicing as a prenatal genetic counselor at Brigham & Women's Hospital (BWH) in Boston, MA. As someone originally from Missouri and Iowa, I needed a change; I welcomed Boston and the Northeast!

During my time at BWH, the bottom dropped out of the economy, as did the funding for my position. I learned so much at BWH, and met some great genetic counselors, but I was unlucky enough to find myself laid off and looking for a new position in the spring of 2010. As people always say, things happen for a reason!

Fortunately, a new position posted at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) at about the same time. This was a full-time position as

a part-time Pediatric Genetic Counselor and a part-time Perinatal Care Coordinator (PCC). The PCC position was a newly created position as a joint venture between MassGeneral Hospital for Children (Department of Pediatrics) and Vincent Obstetrics & Gynecology. As a "hospital within a hospital," MassGeneral Hospital for Children is distinct from the other well-known children's hospital in Boston and affords it a unique opportunity not available in stand-alone children's hospitals.

As a new position at MGH, my job as a PCC allows me the opportunity to create the position to fit in the existing framework. I work with the prenatal genetic counselors, social workers, nurses, MFMs, and OBs to help coordinate care for those women who may need extra support and referrals. I work on scheduling outside second opinions for prenatally diagnosed birth defects and accompany the patients to these appointments as a support person. At times, we receive referrals from other states when their local services cannot provide the

care necessary for one reason or another. So far, the patients seem happy to have someone help coordinate their visits and accompany them on the day of their visit, as MGH is a large hospital and can be confusing. The biggest compliment I have gotten was an invitation to visit the baby after he was born "or else!" Trust me, I will be there!

One of the most interesting activities I have become involved in is the Pediatric Palliative Care Team. I was asked to regularly attend their conferences by the Director of Pediatric Palliative Care, as they are interested in expanding their services to Perinatal Palliative Care. The Pediatric Palliative Care Team has already been able to help a couple of families and they have received great feedback regarding their input.

I have been so lucky to get to work at BWH and MGH. I believe that the training we receive at UNCG, which emphasized the opportunities in "non-traditional genetic counseling," really made an impact. We as GCs have so much to offer!

### Support the MS Genetic Counseling Program

Several years ago we established a *Student Enrichment Fund* for the MS Genetic Counseling Program. Contributions to this fund are used entirely to support current students in the program by providing some much needed support for student capstone projects and other student activities such as joint class meetings. We hope that you will consider making a donation to the Student Enrichment Fund. Any amount will be appreciated. Checks should be made payable to the UNCG MS Genetic Counseling Program and can be mailed c/o Sally Sprague, MS Genetic Counseling, 119 McIver Street, Greensboro, NC 27412

Check out the program website to  
meet the current classes!  
[www.uncg.edu/gen](http://www.uncg.edu/gen)



## Making a difference by Kelly Schoch (2005)

My son asks me every afternoon on the way home what I did at work that day. At first I struggled with my answer, since our jobs are sometimes difficult to explain to intelligent adults! But I simply began telling him the truth. I tell him that I learned lots of new things that day; or that I talked to some children about why they have to go to the doctor a lot; or that I helped some parents understand their kids better; or that I planned a meeting for kids to get to know each other... What a great job!

I work in the pediatrics department at Duke Medical Center and coordinate the 22q11 Deletion Syndrome clinic. We see individuals of all ages with 22q11 Deletion Syndrome, as well as other general genetics patients. However, about three-fourths of my time is devoted to research of this condition. The geneticist I work with has long-standing interest in this area and she

lit the fire in me during our first lunch together in August of 2008. Since about a quarter of young adults with 22q11 Deletion Syndrome develop serious mental illness, our research aims to identify "red flags" that may be present during childhood, specifically neuropsychological characteristics, brain MRI findings, or genetic profiles. Ultimately, we hope to identify a subset of children at highest risk and offer therapy to reduce the effects of debilitating mental illness. Currently we're gearing up for our first attempt at therapy, utilizing a computer-based cognitive remediation program and social skills training. Although logistically this will be a very challenging project, we are super excited about its possibilities for success!

What I really love about my job is developing relationships with the families we see regularly through the research studies or clinic visits. I have become a resource for these families and am honored that they contact me when a need arises. At the same time, they have taught me so much about what it's like to parent a child with 22q11 Deletion Syndrome, and the (at times) over-

whelming anxiety they feel about what may lie in the future.

I am thankful to have been awarded two Kids Care Grants through Duke. We used the first grant to create a 22q11DS Resource Library, consisting of books, pamphlets, and CDs available to families for check-out. The second grant will fund a 22q11DS Family Picnic next spring, as many families have requested more avenues for meeting each other. Our NC 22q11 Support Group holds an educational/networking conference every other year and we invite speakers to share their expertise in this field. For the upcoming meeting we also plan to have adults with 22q11DS share their experiences.

I feel so fortunate to go to work and truly feel like I'm making a difference. Although I don't have a traditional genetic counseling job, I think we all share many of the same rewards and challenges. As Nancy and Sonja told us so many times during our training, we are part of a HELPING profession, and it feels good to be doing just that.

## Alumni Reunion at the NSGC meeting in Dallas



## Professional Updates from Alumni

### Class of 2002

**Brooke Thompson Smith:** I am currently working for Greenwood Genetic Center in their Greenville office and have been here for 8 years now. I am primarily working with pediatric and adult patients, and I also assist with coordination of care and treatment for patients with different lysosomal storage diseases.

**Amy Mottola:** In Nov 2009 I took on additional responsibilities as the clinic supervisor and now supervise the other GCs, sonographers and administrative staff in our Raleigh office. Since I didn't reduce any of my GCs duties, it's been challenging but I've enjoyed developing new skills and learning more about management.



Class of 2002



Class of 2003

### Class of 2003

**Angela Schwab:** After graduation in 2003, I took a cancer genetic counseling position at the Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah. In addition to counseling patients and conducting independent research, I also participated as a council member for the Collaborative Group of the Americas on Inherited Colorectal Cancer. In May 2007, I began my work with Inter-mountain Healthcare in Salt Lake City as their Cardiovascular Research Department Manager. While in this role, I had the opportunity to oversee 25 employees, greater than 60 clinical trials, and an independent research laboratory. In 2009, I decided to expand my business experience and now specialize in clinical research contracting, budgeting, legal reviews, and conducting financial analyses on process improvement initiatives. On a personal note, I also reached a milestone by visiting all 50 states! I still have Shorty and Julie (dogs) and a wonderful boyfriend who has two boys (7 and 8 years old) and a 14 year old daughter. They sure make life interesting! Seven years ago, I would have never expected to be where I am today and am excited to see where the future takes me. I want to say thank you to all my classmates and the UNCG program for giving me the courage and support to follow my dreams.

**Teresa Blake:** Straight out of school I started at the University of Tennessee Genetic Center in Knoxville, TN but in August 2007 I moved to the Ft. Sanders Perinatal Center in Knoxville, TN for a strictly prenatal position that gave me better hours for my growing family. My first child is Evalyn born in March 2007 and I have a son, Zachary, that was born in July 2009. With my family I am happy and very busy, so most of my professional activities have been scaled back.

**Heidi Cope:** I have been working at the Duke Center for Human Genetics for over seven years now. Currently, I coordinate the Hereditary Basis of Neural Tube Defects and The Genetics of Chiari Type I Malformation studies

**Edward Williams:** I continue to work as the lab Genetic Counselor Supervisor with LabCorp's Center for Molecular Biology and Pathology. I've been with LabCorp for 7 years .

### Class of 2003

**Megan Harlan Fleischut:** I am continuing to play an active role in my position at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. I have been involved in numerous projects this past year and am most excited to begin holding Virtual Hereditary Cancer Risk Assessment classes for a select group of our patients. My husband Peter and I are still enjoying New York and are planning a small move (within our apartment building) this fall!

**Jennifer Dickerson:** Genetic counselors in Indiana celebrated a major success this year – as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, we are licensed! I continue to work at Riley Hospital for Children in Neurogenetics. My primary focus is working with families who have children with mitochondrial disease and I have enjoyed getting to know “my” families over the past 3 years. I remain on the board of directors for the Indiana chapter of the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation. The GC program in Indianapolis now has a required rotation in neurogenetics so I have the opportunity to supervise students during their rotations. This fall, I was once again invited to speak about genetic counseling at an alumni panel for freshman biology students at Purdue University – I always enjoy sharing my passion for the field! In my free time, I enjoy spending time with friends and family, as well as my chocolate lab, Rory, who has *finally* made it out of the puppy years! I’m involved in several areas at my church and am thrilled to be a part of this growing ministry.

**Christina (Cain) Rigelsky:** I have been working at the Cleveland Clinic for the past 5 years. I was the first genetic counselor at Cleveland Clinic to specialize in cardiovascular diseases and this has been my emphasis for the past 3 years. Our cardiovascular genetics referrals have increased significantly enough that we now employ an additional cardiovascular genetic counselor. Working at an institution well known for its cardiovascular care has provided me with many opportunities including providing a talk on the genetics of aortic aneurysms at the 2010 Midwestern Vascular Surgical Society meeting. On the personal side, I have been married to Frank for 7 years now and we have a 2-year old son, Andrew, who brings us great joy and we are expecting our second in February 2011.

### Class of 2004

**Monica Trout-Zarb:** I am living in Calgary, Alberta and working in a non-traditional GC role. I work as a clinical consultant for an umbilical cord blood banking company - Inception Biosciences. I am utilizing my genetic counseling education by educating HCP's on how to proactively discuss the option of cord blood banking with parents or families with a genetic condition that would likely require a stem cell transplant. I also provide group educational sessions for expectant parents that are interested in learning more about cord blood banking.

**Rachel Barnett:** I've been at Yale for 6 years now and continue to be busy counseling patients and working on research. I've been involved with several publications in the past year and have included the reference for 2 of them below:

Matloff ET and Barnett RE. The growing role for genetic counseling in endocrinology. *Curr Opin Oncol* 2010 Sep 14. [Epub ahead of print]

Matloff ET, Barnett RE, Bober SL. Unraveling the next chapter: sexual development, body image, and sexual functioning in female BRCA carriers. *Cancer J*. 2009



Class of 2004



Class of 2005

## Class of 2005

**Shannon Morrill-Cornelius:** After providing genetic counseling in Lexington, KY for five years, Shannon Morrill-Cornelius has recently taken a position creating a genetics program at Danbury Hospital in Connecticut. Her research interests include Lynch syndrome screening and she hopes to publish data on reflex screening protocols in community hospitals this fall. Her son, Sawyer, is 2, and quite the scientist. She is no longer married, so look for her as Shannon Morrill in the future.

**Kelly Schoch:** I coordinate the 22q11 Deletion Syndrome clinic at Duke Medical Center and am the study coordinator for several ongoing research studies for this condition. We've had three publications in the last year: Socioeconomic status and psychological function in children with chromosome 22q11.2 deletion syndrome: Implications for genetic counseling; Reactive lymphoid hyperplasia in association with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome and a *BRCA2* mutation; and COMT and anxiety and cognition in children with chromosome 22q11.2 deletion syndrome. I have enjoyed working with Dana in the class of 2011 on her capstone project looking at family communication of a 22q11DS diagnosis. I'm involved with the NC 22q11DS support group and love working with these families.

**Jessica P. Hooks:** Jessica Hooks continues her work as a prenatal counselor at the Women's Institute at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, NC. This past February, she was also named the Fetal Care Counselor for the Charlotte Fetal Care Center, a new division of Carolinas Medical Center and Levine Children's Hospital. The Charlotte Fetal Care Center is dedicated to offering the most advanced fetal therapeutic interventions available and specializes in laser ablation surgery for Twin-Twin Transfusion syndrome.

On a personal *and* professional note, Jessica started her own company this past July. Just Focus Massage and Wellness utilizes a unique blend of massage therapy techniques along with wellness coaching and an integrated wellness network to help clients live without compromise. Just Focus will be launching FocusForward in January 2011, an intense 6-week wellness seminar series to help clients reboot their ideas about how to manage their personal health. Jessica and her 2 year-old dog, Tulie, continue to be avid runners, especially now that it's COOL!

## Class of 2005

**Jill Polk:** This fall I am celebrating my 5th year of employment at Hillcrest Hospital in Mayfield Heights, Ohio, specializing in cancer genetics. I am involved in licensure efforts for the State of Ohio and I am a co-chair for the Ohio Cancer Genetics Network through the Ohio Department of Health. I also work with our local Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) chapter to promote awareness and support of HBOC. I continue to be involved with The Gathering Place, a local support organization for families affected by cancer ([www.touchedbycancer.org](http://www.touchedbycancer.org)), where I am a facilitator for the Kid Shop program. In March 2010 I presented a platform presentation entitled "Pilot Study to Identify Women at High Risk for Hereditary Breast Ovarian Cancer in a Community Based Mammography Clinic Population" at ACMG. I can be contacted at [jpolk@cchseast.org](mailto:jpolk@cchseast.org).

**Courtney Rowe-Teeter:** I work at the Thompson Cancer Survival Center Genetics Clinic in Knoxville, TN, which I started in 2005 after graduation from UNCG. The program grew enough to require the addition of a second genetic counselor in September of 2008. I love working with my cancer patients. For the past few years I have been active with the Tennessee Genetic Counselors Association (TGCA), which helped move forward the passing of licensure of genetic counselors in TN a few years ago. I was on the TGCA Executive Committee in 2008 and 2009 where I helped successfully implement a state-wide salary survey which will be administered annually moving forward.

### **Melissa (Stillberger) Gibbons:**

I currently work as a pediatric counselor at The Children's Hospital in Colorado. After two years of general genetic clinic involvement, I developed a genetic counselor role within the Neurology Department. It has been a great experience developing this new position, creating a NeuroGenetic Clinic and becoming involved in our movement disorder clinic. Additionally I work in our MDA Muscle Clinic once a week and am truly passionate about this part of my job. I was lucky enough to be the coordinator on the recent Ataluren trial and will be assuming that role again as we move into the open label access study this fall. In order to maintain my general genetic skills I travel to one of our many outreach clinics 6 times a year. I also get the pleasure of supervising students from the UC Denver Program, it really is an honor to watch them mature into counselors.

### Class of 2006

**Tammy Ader:** I have been working for Genzyme Genetics for over 4 years now as a prenatal genetic counselor in Miami. In addition to counseling I also participate in our county's Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) board where I help evaluate different cases of fetal & infant death in the county, as well as occasionally help out with free Ashkenazi Jewish carrier screenings sponsored by the Victor Center for Jewish Genetic disease.

**Alice Tanner:** After working for a few years at Emory as a clinical counselor (prenatal and cancer) and then as a laboratory counselor for the DNA lab, I am now a Technical Laboratory Director for the DNA lab at Emory Genetics Lab. It's basically an assistant lab director since I have to pass boards yet again in molecular genetics to get my FACMG and be a full lab director. But for now, I am analyzing data and writing results reports for DNA testing. I'm also involved in helping to bring new technology from the Emory research labs into the clinical lab to offer to patients, like Next Generation sequencing and genechips. Watch our web site for new offerings!

As for home life, my husband and I still live happily at home with our 2 kitties. We have been talking about having kids sometime relatively soon, but I'll guess we'll have to wait to see what comes of that!

**Gayle Simpson Patel:** I am still working in Austin, TX at 'Specially for Children' doing a little bit of everything. Hope everyone is doing well.

**Amanda (Buglio) Horrigan:** has spent the last four years since graduation working for a busy prenatal clinic at Women & Infants' Hospital in Providence, RI. She feels fortunate to work closely with six other prenatal counselors and two MFM/Geneticists and continues to enjoy a varied caseload, along with the opportunity to mentor genetic counseling students from nearby programs including Brandeis and Boston University. Currently her prenatal diagnosis center is very active with recruiting patients for a maternal plasma based fetal RNA test to identify Down syndrome - a test that may have the ability to noninvasively diagnose fetal chromosome abnormalities in the near future. The past year has been particularly rich with wonderful change for Amanda and her husband Sean. Their daughter, Grace, was born in February, and their family has recently relocated to Sandwich, Massachusetts. For anyone traveling to Cape Cod, they would love for you to visit!

### Class of 2006

**Katie Fritinger:** I am still practicing prenatal genetic counseling with Genzyme Genetics in Miami, FL. I have been with the company since I graduated in 2006. I am part of a team at Genzyme Genetics that provides educational talks to OBs, nurses, MA's and other staff about genetic testing. I attended the NSGC meeting this year. I recently got married (September 17, 2010) in Ohio (where I am originally from). We had friends and family travel from all over the country and from Costa Rica (my husband's, Alejandro Porras, family is from Costa Rica) to attend our wedding. We plan to reside in Miami and enjoy our time as newly weds with our dog!



Class of 2006

### Class of 2007

**Amanda (Gordon) Noyes** – After my graduation from UNCG in 2007, I joined the University of Tennessee Genetics Center as their sole genetic counselor. Although the center sees mainly pediatric patients, I was peripherally involved with those patients and mainly spent my time seeing oncology and adult (family history, preconception or pre-symptomatic Huntington testing) patients, with a few pediatric cases along with the way when a child was diagnosed within the center. However, with the retirement of one employee and new addition of a 2<sup>nd</sup> genetic counselor in 2009, we rearranged the genetic counselor position within the center and the two of us are now seeing all of the pediatric cases, as well as the adults I was previously counseling. The new diversity in patients has been extremely rewarding, especially for someone who thought she'd like to "specialize" in one area. Our center is also in the process of bringing microarray lab technology "in-house" to our molecular/cytogenetic labs, which means I'm currently participating in interpretation training, which is both challenging and exciting. In personal news, my husband Erik and I welcomed our daughter, Audrey, in July, 2008. She's a complete joy to us and at two years old has already mastered a degree of sarcasm and an eyebrow raise that makes us well aware that we're in big trouble for the future!

### Class of 2007

**Shana Merrill:** I have been working as a clinical genetic counselor in adult medical genetics at the University of Pennsylvania for nearly two years after moving up to Philadelphia, PA from Roanoke, VA where I had a dynamic prenatal counseling job at Carilion Clinic. At Penn my subspecialties include cardiovascular genetics and connective tissue disorders, as well as neuroendocrine tumor predisposition syndromes and genodermatoses. I enjoy supervising genetic counseling students, giving lectures on various topics to a variety of audiences, and serving as a study coordinator for research about cerebral AVMs in HHT (enjoy is used in a laxed fashion for that last one). It's fun to have another UNCG grad's (Jackie Powers) office a mere 10 floors above me. We try our best to keep the "well at UNCG..." talk to a minimum.

**Kacey Platky :** is working at the Weisskopf Child Evaluation Center at the University of Louisville. She sees a variety of patients through the general genetics clinic and also coordinates a weekly prenatal clinic. The clinical laboratory is working on bringing microarray technology in-house, and she will also be working with the lab to report out abnormal results.



Class of 2007



### Class of 2008

**Claire Healy-Hibbard:** I'm working as a clinical counselor at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. I see patients in Boston and in New Hampshire at our three satellite clinics. A co-worker and I received a grant from the NSGC Cancer SIG earlier this year for a research study that we'll be conducting to look at ways of improving communication of genetic test results among families.

**Emily Rettner:** I have been working at Children's Hospital Oakland in the Pediatric Medical Genetic Department for just over 2 years. I am also involved in the Craniofacial Panel twice a month as well as Baby Panel (Cleft Lip and Palate) once a month. I briefly did genetic counseling for the Hematology Department (Sickle Cell and Thalassemia Clinic) for about 5 months. I am the clinic coordinator for the Skeletal Dysplasia Clinic, held jointly with Kaiser Oakland 4 times a year. In my attempt to make my life easier, and to not have to wait for Spanish Interpreters at least once a week, I am trying to teach myself Spanish. I am also a member of the NSGC, and I have been certified since 2009.

I gave softball a try, but within 6 months, I had seriously pulled my quad (which took 3 months to heal), fractured my pinky (and continued to play 9 innings as catcher), and and likely permanently warped my eyeball as a result of using contacts (just to play softball). I am now score keeper instead, which is much safer. When I'm not hurting myself trying new sports, I work on painting, drawing, or designing cards using construction paper. I still love to bake, and have been working on my cousin's wedding cake. She is getting married in July of next year. Wish me luck!

### Class of 2008

**Rachel Mills:** I am currently living in Durham with my 2 year old terrier-mix, Beau, and working at Duke University in the Institute for Genome Sciences and Policy doing research on genetics and diabetes. I'm currently working on two projects where we are providing genetic test results for risk of developing type 2 diabetes and measuring to see if and to what degree behaviors like diet and exercise change as a result of the genetic risk results. In one study we are also comparing understanding in individuals that receive results via an online program (similar to direct-to-consumer testing) versus those that receive results in person with a genetic counselor (me). I also do some clinical work with the Duke Executive Health Program providing family history assessments for patients. I am a member of the North Carolina Medical Genetics Association.

Currently, I'm serving as chair for a UNCG student capstone committee. The student is investigating patient knowledge of melanoma and genetics. I am really enjoying working on her committee and look forward to helping with other capstone projects in the future.

**Jacquelyn Powers:** Still working at Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania working predominantly with breast/ovarian/GI cancers. Recently collaborated to devise a protocol (now approved) for whole exome sequencing to uncover novel variants associated with cancer susceptibility. Have been running with "Karma Striders" which raises money for the MS Society and just completed the Boston Maraton this past April 2010!



Class of 2008

### Class of 2009

**Tomi Toler:** Is working at Massachusetts General Hospital as a Pediatric Genetic Counselor and Perinatal Care Coordinator.

She is the head coach for basketball and soccer teams for Special Olympics

Massachusetts. The local program is Friends of Special Olympics out of the North Shore/Danvers area. Tomi is a member of the National Society of Genetic Counselors. She was involved in a poster presented at ASHG "Jaffe-Campanacci syndrome and neurofibromatosis type 1, revisited: case report and review of the literature from the geneticist's perspective." S. Ruppert, *et al.*

**Diana Smith:** I am currently living in Cincinnati and working at Cincinnati Children's Hospital where I have a variety of clinics including general prenatal (at Cincinnati Children's, the Fetal Care Center of Cincinnati and at an outreach hospital), general pediatrics, CF newborn screening clinic and cancer counseling twice a month at a Children's branch campus. I have participated in community BRCA discussion groups, a panel discussion in the community regarding BRCA and the cancer counselors of the greater Cincinnati area are currently planning a BRCA carrier conference in March using our Susan G. Komen funding. I will be co-presenting a case report at the 3rd Annual Ohio Perinatal Collaborative meeting in a few weeks. I am also planning to attend ACMG this coming March, so if anyone else will be there as well please let me know! It will be my first time attending this particular meeting and it would be great to see some familiar faces.

**Kate Major Foreman:** I have lots of news since the first newsletter-- both professional and personal. Noah and I got married December 19, 2009, and I moved to Chapel Hill, NC a month later to start a new job as a genetic counselor in the Cancer and Adult Genetics Clinic at UNC. After graduating from law school, Noah joined me in North Carolina and we adopted our dog, Scout.



Class of 2009

### Class of 2010

**Whitney Cogswell:** has recently taken a job at the Medical Center of Central Georgia as a cancer genetic counselor-the first they've ever had at that institution. She also presented her graduate capstone project entitled North Carolina Primary Care Providers' Awareness of Direct-To-Consumer Genetic Testing at the NSGC AEC in Dallas for which she was a "Best Poster Award" candidate.

**Alexis Carere:** I started my first job in July in the Provincial Medical Genetics Program of Newfoundland and Labrador, in St. John's, NL, Canada. I primarily practice cancer genetics, but I also coordinate the metabolic clinic. Outside of work, I have started volunteering with the Autism Society of Newfoundland, and I recently became the leader of a Sparks unit (what 5-6 year old Girl Scouts are called in Canada). Although I was sad to miss the NSGC conference, I am very excited to be attending the CAGC conference for the first time this year in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

**Theresa Mihalic:** I recently started a job (in July) as a pediatric genetic counselor at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH. I see patients in the general genetics clinic, and am also the genetic counselor for the hospital's multidisciplinary Craniofacial Clinic.



Class of 2010

### Class of 2010

**Courtney (McGuire) Yerxa:** accepted a genetic counseling position in molecular genetics at LabCorp in RTP, NC and began working there in July 2010. She presented a poster of her graduate capstone project entitled "Genetic Counseling Inter-Personal and Intra-Personal Individual Variability in Risk Assessment and Prediction of BRCA1 and BRCA2 Mutations" at the most recent NSGC AEC meeting. Courtney also recently got married this summer to Christian Yerxa, an Air Force pilot.

**Kelly East:** recently began a job at the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology in Huntsville, Alabama in their educational outreach department.

**Kristen Cornell:** has recently begun her job as a pediatric genetic counselor at Emory University, in Atlanta, GA. She's enjoying exploring a new city as well as spending weekends visiting classmates that live close by. She also presented her graduate Capstone project entitled "Talking to those who have been there: Identifying barriers to adult healthcare for individuals with phenylketonuria." as a poster at the most recent NSGC meeting.

### Class of 2010

**Holly Taylor:** is currently working as a laboratory Genetic Counselor at GeneCare/Alere Medical Genetics Center in Chapel Hill, NC. She attended the NSGC AEC this year and was able to present her Capstone research project, "The Relationship Between Ethnicity and Nuchal Fold" as a contributed paper presentation.



Class of 2010 at Courtney Yerxa's June 12 wedding!

## Class of 2010 Capstone Projects at the NSGC

### Paper Presentations

Taylor, Holly, Eubanks, S., Wolfe, H. and Emily Hardisty. The Relationship Between Nuchal Fold Measurement and Ethnicity.

Rush, Brooke, Eubanks, S., Goodnight, W., and Emily Hardisty. Pregnancy Outcomes in Survivors of Abdominal Wall Defects.

### Poster Presentations

Cogswell, Whitney, Christianson, C., Eubanks, S. and Karen Potter Powell. North Carolina Primary Care Providers' Awareness of Direct-To-Consumer Genetic Testing.

Kristen Cornell, Beth A. Hudson, Betsy Swope, Dianne Frazier, Nancy P. Callanan. Talking to Those That Have Been There: Identifying Barriers to Adult Health Care for Individuals with Phenylketonuria

East, Kelly, Callanan, N., Lamb, N. and Adam Hott. Evaluation of Biotech 101: An Educational Outreach Program in Genetics and Biotechnology.

McGuire, Courtney, Fine, C., Evans, J., Healy, C. and Nancy Callanan. Genetic Counseling Inter-Personal and Intra-Personal Individual Variability in Risk Assessment and Prediction of BRCA1 and BRCA2 Mutations.

# Congratulations!

Melissa (Stillberger) Gibbons married Dave Gibbons in 2008 and they welcomed their daughter Claire on December 6, 2009!

Claire Healy-Hibbard married September 2009 & expecting a baby in February! (right)



Kelly Schoch and family welcome son Jacob on July 2, 2010. He is a happy baby and loves his big brother Chase (above)

Brooke Thompson Smith and husband expecting first child in

Robin King (supervisor) will be welcoming her third child just before Thanksgiving. He/she will be joining big brothers Jack, 4,

Rachel Barnett is expecting in December!

Tammy Ader is getting married to her fiancé Alon Adar on March 5th, 2011!

Gayle Simpson Patel and husband Niraj are expecting their daughter any day now!

Edward Williams and wife Ann are expecting their first son in December!



Jill Polk and her husband Shane and their 2 year old son Parker welcomed their daughter Remy Laine in July 2010!

Amanda Horrigan and family! (above)

Theresa Mihalic is getting married in May, 2011!

Amanda Noyes' daughter Audrey (above)



Kate and Noah adopted Scout (above)

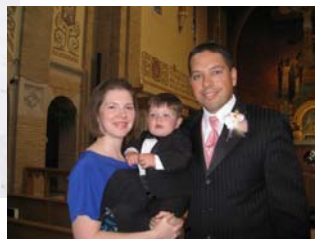
Diana Smith is awaiting the arrival of her first niece or nephew in March. Only time will tell!

Jennifer Dickerson is excited for the arrival of her first nephew "Baby D" in December. He will be loved and spoiled by his Aunt Jen!



Monica Trout Zarb and Patrick Zarb married on July 30th, 2010!

Kate Major Foreman married December, 2009! (above)



Rigelsky family (above)

Amy Mottola is expecting her third child, a little boy, in November!



Vanessa Rangel, Monica Trout Zarb and Ulrika Lange at Monica's wedding

Kacey Platky and fiancé Keith Warren, are planning a September 2011 wedding in Maryland!



Courtney Teeter-Rowe and daughter Sophia Abigail Teeter who was born on June 12, 2009 (above)