

Letter from Nancy

Hello everyone,

I really look forward to writing a note to our wonderful alumni for the annual newsletter. I want to start by thanking Randi Stewart, Assistant Program Director, and Becca Johnson, Class of 2014 for all of their efforts in putting together this newsletter.

This has been a busy and productive year for the program. Last Fall we completed our ABGC Reaccreditation Self-Study. This is an extensive evaluation process that gives us the chance to carefully review all aspects of the program, including program outcomes. The process includes evaluation of program components by external Self-Study Committees, and a survey of program graduates and their employers. I will take this opportunity to thank all of you who completed the graduate survey, and to recognize program alumni who served on self-study committees. Your efforts helped us to prepare a comprehensive application. The ABGC Site Team visited us in March, and we received notice in April that we were fully reaccredited for 8 years, the maximum allowable time period. Yeah!! I thought you might also be interested in hearing about a few of the major program outcomes that we documented as part of this process:

- 98.6 % of eligible program graduates have achieved ABGC certification (this includes Class of 2002-2010)
- 95% of 2006-2010 graduates completed the graduate survey. When asked about their overall level of satisfaction regarding the preparation they received from the UNCG Genetic Counseling Program for their current position or a previous genetic counseling position, graduates unanimously reported being very satisfied and well-prepared.
- On a scale of 1 to 5, with a higher number representing greater levels of satisfaction, employers were asked to rate many aspects of the clinical skills, knowledge base, abilities and overall satisfaction of the UNCG graduate whom they employ. The average rating of employers' overall satisfaction with the performance of the UNCG graduate was 4.87 out of 5. 100% of employers who completed the employer survey reported that they would employ a future graduate of the UNCG Genetic Counseling Program if given the opportunity.

As you know, last year the program was moved to a new administrative home – the UNCG School of Health and Human Sciences (HHS). I am very pleased to report that this transition has gone very well. Our program is valued by Dean Hooper, and our program was eligible for some new resources because of our new academic home. We also had the opportunity to nominate alumni for the HHS Alumni Association Pacesetter Award, and thrilled to be there to celebrate when **Kristy Lee** (Class of 2002) received this award last April (see related article on page 4). **Randi Culp Stewart** (Assistant Program Director, Class of 2002) has actively represented



the Genetic Counseling Program on the HHS Alumni Board, and is now President-Elect of this Association – go Randi!

As I read through the updates you have provided, I am so pleased and excited to hear about your professional and personal accomplishments – congratulations to all of you! I am also very pleased to congratulate Meagan Weisenhart (Class of 2012) for receiving the NSGC Best Student Abstract Award this year (see article page 2), as well as all of our graduates whose work was presented at the 2012 NSGC Meeting (see page 2). It is so gratifying to see UNCG so well-represented at the NSGC meeting.

This is also a good time to recognize the countless contributions our clinical supervisors, guest lecturers, capstone project committee members, other UNCG faculty, and of course, Sally Sprague make to our program. I hope you will enjoy reading the supervisor spotlights (see page 7-8) and faculty updates (page 15) and spotlight on Sally Sprague (page 15). I know that these folks are fondly remembered by many of you.

We have an excellent group of current students on board and I can tell you that they are fully living up to the high standards set by those who have come before them. I enjoy teaching and mentoring these students and as always, learn from my students all the time. I have the best job on earth!

I hope that you enjoy this newsletter and that you will continue to stay in contact with us. We love hearing from you. I also hope that you will take this opportunity to “give back” to the program by making a contribution to the **Student Enrichment Fund** (see more about this on page 3). Current and future students really need your support.

It was great seeing so many of you in Boston, and we missed those of you who were not able to be there. I think of all of you often and smile each time I look at your photos and the contributions you made to our “home” at 119 McIver.

Wishing you all the best,
Nancy

Congratulations Class of 2012!

Class of 2012 Capstone Projects at NSGC

Platform Presentation

Farmer Wiesenhart, Meagan, Reitnauer, Pamela, Earls, Marian and Stewart, Randi. Exploring the Relationship between Diagnoses of Congenital Anomalies or Genetic Conditions and Postpartum Depression: A Retrospective Study.

Poster Presentation

Guerrero, Brittany, Matthews, Catherine, Abernathy, Josh and Callanan, Nancy. Strategies to Increase Student Awareness of Genetic Counseling as a Career Option as Perceived by High School Science Teachers.

Jesiolowski, Julie, Wedehase, Barbara and Fisher, Amy and Callanan, Nancy. Coping Mechanisms in Fathers of Children with Mucopolysaccharidoses.

Kiss, Courtney, Harris, Sally, Goodnight, William and Stewart, Randi. The Natural History of Pregnancies Diagnosed with Down Syndrome: Developing Counseling and Pregnancy Management Guidelines.

Noss, Ryan, Mills, Rachel, Haga, Suzanne, and Callanan, Nancy. The Incorporation of Predictive Genomic Testing into Genetic Counseling Programs.



2012 NSGC Best Student Abstract Award

We would like to congratulate **Meagan Farmer Wiesenhart** (Class of 2012) for being awarded **Best Student Abstract Award** at the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) Annual Education Conference this October! Her Capstone project entitled “Exploring the Relationship between Diagnoses of Congenital Anomalies or Genetic Conditions and Postpartum Depression (PPD): A Retrospective Study” was chaired by Dr. Pamela Reitnauer.



Meagan’s study found that the rate of PPD among women having an infant with a congenital anomaly or genetic condition was approximately twofold that of the control group, which has not been previously investigated or reported in the medical literature. “The bottom line is that having a child with a congenital anomaly or genetic condition may increase the risk for experiencing PPD and should be explored further,” said Meagan. Many of us enjoyed her presentation describing this data and implications for future research at the meeting in Boston. “If we know that this type of diagnosis increases the risk of PPD, we can offer anticipatory guidance in a prenatal setting after a diagnosis is made or screen for PPD and provide proper resources in the pediatric setting. The hope is that we can normalize some of the feelings for mothers and provide better care to the whole family.” Meagan is currently working with her committee to prepare a manuscript for publication.

Congratulations, Meagan! We are proud of you!

Class of 2012 Capstone Presentations



The Class of 2012 celebrates on Capstone day!



First and second year students enjoying time together before graduation.

A Note from Nancy about the Student Enrichment Fund

Do you remember how excited you were as a second year student to attend your first NSGC meeting? The Class of 2013 just enjoyed this experience, and I can tell you that they made the most of the opportunity to increase their knowledge of cutting edge topics, to learn about our professional organization, and to network and connect with potential employers. Over the past few years it has, unfortunately, become increasingly difficult to provide funding for our students to attend this meeting. Although the North Carolina Medical Genetics Association graciously provides opportunities for our students to apply for small travel grants, the UNCG Graduate Student Association Funding is now based on a “lottery” system – and this year **none** of our students received this funding. For the past 2 years we have relied heavily on the **MS Genetic Counseling Program Student Enrichment Fund** as the primary source of funding for our students. This fund is used entirely to support student professional development. In addition to providing travel support, the fund is used to support student Capstone Projects and the Joint Class Meetings. To show my personal commitment to supporting our students I have contributed \$2000 each year to this fund for the past two years.

We need your help to keep this fund going! I have been doing “the math” and have come up with some estimates for how your contributions could help. We now have 89 program graduates. If every one of you contributed just **\$40.00 each year**, we would have enough funds to provide about \$450.00 of funding for capstone projects and travel to each second year student. Larger donations would help us to support our first year students to travel to the NCMGA meeting and to continue to support the joint class meetings. Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to the Student Enrichment fund this year! We need your support and this is a great way to “give back” so that our current students will have the same opportunities that you had during your time at UNCG. [[Click here](#) to make a contribution online.] You may also send a check payable to the “MS Genetic Counseling Program Student Enrichment Fund”. Checks should be mailed directly to:

Sally Sprague
UNCG MS Genetic Counseling Program
119 Mclver Street

HHS Alumni Association Pacesetter Award: Kristy Lee (Class of 2002)

With the merging of 7 departments and 3 programs at UNCG last summer, the new School of Health and Human Sciences (HHS) was born. As our Genetic Counseling program is a member of this new family, we were also invited to join the newly created HHS Alumni Association. Welcome to all of our program's alumni that are now a part of this new alumni community!

One goal of this organization is to honor and recognize alumni of all its programs and departments that have made significant contributions in their respective fields. This past April marked the first annual HHS Alumni Awards & Recognition Reception, where various awards were bestowed upon notable HHS alumni. Specifically, the HHS Pacesetter Award acknowledges an alumnus that has "attained local, state or regional recognition through their achievements in scholarship, leadership or service." We are proud and honored to announce **Kristy Lee (Class of 2002)** as the recipient of the 2012 HHS Pacesetter Award!

While at Greenwood Genetics Center (GGC) from 2003 to 2007, Kristy was a laboratory genetic counselor and counseled patients in cancer, pediatric, adult and prenatal specialties. She worked to create valuable patient resources and helped to generate and disseminate laboratory literature online and at national meetings. Kristy described GGC as "an amazing place to work and grow as a genetic counselor. It is a non-profit center completely focused on diagnosing, treating and taking care of patients with genetic conditions." She offers great insight and advice to graduates and current students by saying, "If there is one thing that working at GGC taught me, it was never to turn down opportunities given to you. I never saw myself working as a laboratory counselor when I was in training, but I really loved it and learned so much."

Kristy then transitioned to UNC-Chapel Hill in 2007, where she has already made a large impact. She counsels patients in adult and cancer clinics including specialty clinics in bleeding disorders and retinal disorders. "I work with an amazing team where I am able to assist with cutting-edge research projects," shares Kristy. "and I always have their support to pursue my own research interests." She has been the project manager for the Whole Genomic Analysis of High Risk Cancer Families study at UNC since 2009.

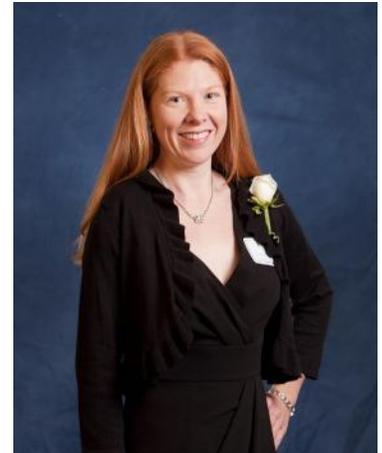
Kristy had previously covered a maternity leave at Wilmington Maternal-Medicine in 2002; years later, she recognized and fulfilled a great need in this community by developing and now staffing the monthly Coastal Cancer Clinic in Wilmington, NC. She also was primary investigator on the grant she wrote to secure funding for this endeavor. She is extremely involved in grant writing, public speaking to local and national audiences, presents her research findings and publishes on a variety of topics.

Through her dedication to families in ophthalmology clinic, Kristy has become an advocate for patients with eye diseases. She became a Board Member for the Raleigh-Durham Chapter of the Foundation for Fighting Blindness in 2008 and the Co-Chair of Education Programs in 2009. She is now President of this organization. "This organization is dear to me because the money raised is used to develop cures, not just treatments, for individuals with retinal diseases," said Kristy. "Money raised by this organization provided the seed money for research studies that have now led to a number of gene therapy trials for retinal diseases." Kristy is now the principal investigator on a retina whole exome sequencing (WES) project and is enrolling patients seen in the UNC Ophthalmology Genetics Clinic in a study offering WES free to patients with eye diseases of unknown etiology.

Not only does she devote her personal time to her patients, but she demonstrates how to "give back" to our profession. Kristy serves on the Familial Cancer Risk Counseling Special Interest Group and the Continuing Education Committee. She has been active at our National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) Annual Education Conferences with many poster and platform presentations as well as Education Breakout Sessions including "Hereditary Ophthalmologic Conditions: A New 'Vision'." Kristy has supervised genetic counseling students on clinical rotations since 2003. She has served on many student Capstone committees, delivered lectures at our program for many years and supported our program in various capacities including during the reaccreditation process.

Kristy Lee has established herself to be an outstanding alumnus, making significant contributions in individual lives as well as the genetics community through her patient care, educational efforts, research, advocacy and student mentoring. She has represented herself and the UNCG Genetic Counseling Program with utmost integrity. Kristy reveals her passion by stating, "I feel it is an honor and privilege to be an alumus of the UNCG MS Genetic Counseling Program. I am so thankful for having the opportunity to work in a field every day that I enjoy so much, and I love being able to give back to Nancy Callanan and our Program."

Kristy has earned the title of "Pacesetter" in the last decade and we have every reason to believe that she will be a pacesetter for many years to come. The HHS Alumni Association, alumni community and UNCG Genetic Counseling Program join together in congratulating you, Kristy!



Written by: Randi Culp Stewart



Genetic Counseling in the Setting of Fetal Therapy: A Day in the Life

My name is Diana Smith and I am currently one of the two genetic counselors employed at the Fetal Care Center of Cincinnati (FCCC). I was recently approached by the UNCG program to share some of my experiences and insight into genetic counseling in the setting of fetal therapy. I hope that the following short article sheds some light and sparks interest in this field as I have no doubt that this professional setting will continue to create opportunities for genetic counselors.

To provide some background, the FCCC is housed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and utilizes Maternal-Fetal Medicine (MFM) specialists from our collaborating hospitals including the University of Cincinnati Hospital and Good Samaritan Hospital. We are a tertiary center who receives referrals primarily from MFMs but also from primary Obstetricians and self-referrals. Our patient population includes families who have known about the birth defects in their current pregnancy from as early as the first trimester or as recent as the night before they traveled to Cincinnati for emergent intervention.

Our primary referring diagnosis is twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS) but we also see a variety of diagnoses including congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH), lower urinary tract obstructions (LUTO), myelomeningocele, twin reversed arterial perfusion (TRAP), teratomas (sacrocoxygeal, mediastinal, cervical), congenital high airway malformation obstruction syndrome (CHAOS) and congenital cystic adenomatoid malformation (CCAM)/congenital pulmonary airway malformation (CPAM). Our center offers various fetal interventions, depending on the indication, including selective fetoscopic laser photocoagulation (SFLP) for TTTS, fetal shunting, fetoscopic cystoscopic laser treatment and vesicocentesis for LUTO, in utero repair of myelomeningocele and special ex-utero intrapartum treatment (EXIT) deliveries.

If I could describe how our center functions in one word, it would be "teamwork". From initial patient triaging to delivery and post-natal care, we work integrally with every member of our staff including our three administrators, six nurse coordinators, social worker, three pediatric surgeons and various pediatric specialties. Families typically arrive at our center in the morning to undergo various studies including fetal MRI, fetal ultrasound and fetal echocardiogram followed by individual consults during the day, including genetic counseling. We conclude the visit with a team meeting with the family to summarize the imaging findings, offer potential

interventions and provide recommendations for the remainder of pregnancy and delivery.

One way that counseling in FCCC is unique is that a fair amount of our patients have already received genetic counseling and/or have had extensive conversations with their referring physicians; thus, our individual sessions do not always require complete intake and/or pedigree to be drawn. I sometimes find this to be an advantage in that we can spend more time discussing the diagnosis and/or potential testing options. Even though individuals may have had previous counseling, their first encounters may have occurred shortly following their initial diagnosis where they may have been overwhelmed or in an initial state of shock. In those instances, it is often helpful for them to review the information again with the family. On the other hand, we also have a population of patients who are receiving second or third opinions from our center and thus have read every study there is on their specific diagnosis and are very prepared and appear to be experts on the condition.

Furthermore, while my counselor instinct is to explain details of the diagnosis from the embryological etiology through the potential interventions and long-term prognosis, I often have to keep in mind that this is also the goal of the team meeting and that the pediatric surgeons present will review this information in far greater detail. In addition, the referring diagnosis is not always the working diagnosis at the end of the day. Therefore, if I'm meeting with a family before the MRI results are available, it is difficult to go into detail of all options when some/all of these options may not be available if the diagnosis changes. Given these considerations, not every counseling session is as in-depth as one might think. We also often have strict time limitations with the family, thus it is not uncommon to have just enough time to collect needed history and then summarize our recommendations during the team meeting.

Being housed in Cincinnati Children's, we are fortunate to have access to our Clinical Geneticists who are vital to our team. We have numerous families who were seen by a geneticist at FCCC and then continue to have their child follow with the same geneticist long-term. This unique opportunity allows us to be a close support for families from the beginning and also allows for strong continuity of care.

One final unique aspect of the position is that because fetal therapy centers are somewhat scarce, we see individuals not only within the state of Ohio but across the nation. These families may come in for a one-time evaluation or may end up re-locating to the area for intervention and/or post-natal care. In either situation, communication with the families and their referring physicians to coordinate their care is crucial. So while we may only get to meet with a family for one visit, we have the ability to help them along their journey from afar.

All in all, the fetal therapy setting carries the core qualities of prenatal counseling but also has its unique opportunities. My position at FCCC has not only broadened my knowledge of fetal conditions/treatment, but has also provided invaluable experience in allowing me to support families from diagnosis to delivery and beyond. Please feel free to visit our website for additional information (<http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/service/f/fetal-care/default/>) or contact me directly with any questions.

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UNCG Alumni and Students at NSGC

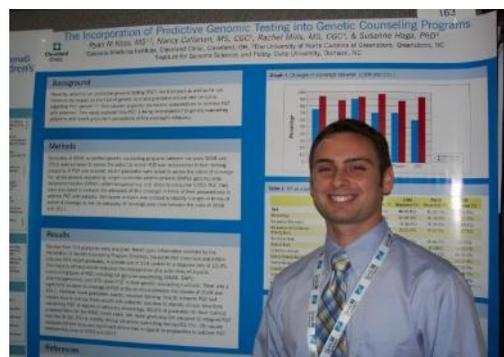
October 2012 in Boston, MA



Having fun at the alumni reunion!



Current second year students on a haunted ghost tour of historic Boston.



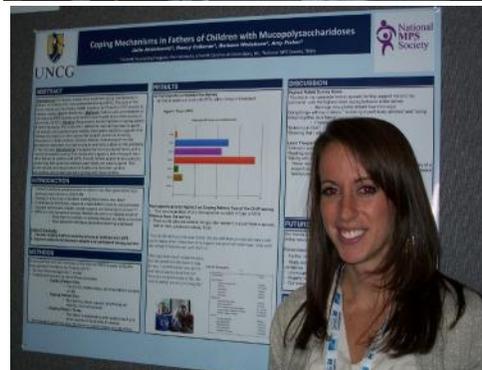
Ryan, Courtney and Julie (Class of 2012) representing UNCG at poster presentations.



Heidi, Tracey and Christina (Class of 2003) spending time together at the meeting. Congratulations, Heidi, on receiving the 2013 Audrey Heimler Award!



Current students and recent grads at poster presentations.



Supervisor Spotlights

The UNCG Genetic Counseling Program is fortunate to have such devoted clinic supervisors that model many exemplary skills and behaviors for our students. Below, the Class of 2012 shares some memorable experiences with their inspirational supervisors and mentors.

Christie Turcott

Nominated by: Courtney Kiss

“Christie was one of my supervisors at UNC Pediatrics. She welcomed me onto the team, and made sure I had as many learning opportunities as possible. Christie was always available to answer my questions, no matter how many I had. She made time to discuss each case with me beforehand, and also to debrief each case afterwards. Working with Christie was a great experience!”



Christie Turcott is a pediatric genetic counselor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She graduated from the genetic counseling training program at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in 2008 and has been working at UNC since her graduation. Christie brings a positive energy and dedication to student supervision, which is apparent to her students and fellow supervisors. “The outstanding supervision I received from the Mount Sinai counselors provided me with invaluable guidance on how to do the same for the UNC-G students,” credits Christie.



Jennifer Sullivan-Saarela

Nominated by: Sarah Wienke

“Jennifer was my supervisor at Duke Pediatrics but she began inspiring me even before my entrance into the UNCG Genetic Counseling Program. As a college senior, Jennifer allowed me to volunteer at Duke and learn more about genetic counseling as a career underneath her supervision. Jennifer is very dedicated to her patients as well as the education of new genetic counselors. As a supervisor she sat down with me on the first day to learn what my goals were, tell me what

her expectations were and how I can become a better counselor. I had already decided that I had a passion for pediatric genetic counseling and Jennifer was committed to helping me obtain my goals. Working with her in metabolic clinic inspired me to select a position where I would work with patients in a continuous and lifelong relationship. She showed me how rewarding it can be and helped me identify and strengthen my weaknesses so that I can help patients the way that she does.”

Jennifer Sullivan-Saarela graduated from the University of South Carolina genetic counseling training program in 1996, started working at Duke in 1997 and began supervising genetic counseling students the following year. “Having genetic counseling students with me in clinic helps freshen my perspective about my patients” says Jennifer. “I find myself thinking about the counseling sessions in a different way, often more deeply, when I have the chance to experience a session with an engaged learner.”

Jessica Hooks (Class of 2005)

Nominated by: Nikki Fleming

"All of my supervisors helped me grow and push past my professional obstacles. The one I'd like to highlight was actually not my supervisor in the traditional sense of the word, but my Capstone Chair, Jessica Hooks. I observed her counseling at Charlotte Fetal Care Center and worked closely with her throughout my Capstone project. Anyone who has met Jessica, I think, has to be inspired by her amazing amount of energy, her compassion, her joyfulness, and her sincere dedication to everything she does. Her role in her genetic counseling position is less traditional than the typical prenatal counselor as she deals primarily with high-risk patients, and she has developed it into what she wants to do (on top of owning a company). She introduced me to genetic counseling "outside the box" and indirectly helped me to explore what it was I wanted in my job (and my life). LabCorp has been an unexpected turn in my career, and I am loving it. Jessica has been encouragement and support all the way, through second year of grad school, job-hunting, and beyond."



Jessica Hooks is an alumnus of the UNCG genetic counseling program, graduating in the Class of 2005. After graduation, she worked on an NIEHS grant called The ANGEL Study right after graduation. It was housed at the University of South Carolina and was a joint effort between USC, NIEHS, and private industry to put together a national consortium to study the causes of anencephaly. She began working at Carolinas Medical Center since 2008 and specifically with the Charlotte Fetal Care Center since it opened in 2010. "It's fascinating to be on the other side of the Capstone project process, thinking about research and its application from a clinical perspective now that I have a few years of experience," said Jessica. "Having gone through that process personally, I definitely have empathy for the stress the students are under and their desire to produce a quality product. It was a valuable experience for me professionally, and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to build a relationship with a current student in the program."



Amy Mottola (Class of 2002)

Nominated by: Julie Jesiolowski

"Amy Mottola was my supervisor at Duke Prenatal. She is an incredible role model and characterizes all aspects of a wonderful genetic counselor. Amy was in UNCG's first graduating class, and her years of experience counseling prenatal patients showed as she encouraged me and helped me develop into the prenatal genetic counselor I am today. Her wide knowledge base and compassion towards students was evident as she continuously facilitated new

opportunities for my personal growth within the clinic setting. Whether this was explaining a difficult concept or taking time to offer a few words of encouragement, she always made me feel appreciated and valued, despite the busy clinic schedule. Amy is also a mother of three adorable boys (soon to be four!) and even with her busy home life, she always arrived each day with a positive attitude and was willing to answer questions or point me in the right direction. I was very inspired by Amy, and it was during this rotation that I fell in love with prenatal genetic counseling. I am so thankful to have gotten to work with Amy!!"

Amy (Truscello) Mottola graduated from the UNCG Genetic Counseling program in 2002 and has been working at Duke Perinatal Consultants clinic in Raleigh ever since. Over the last decade, Amy has been committed to supervising genetic counseling students from which many of our alumni have benefitted. "I had such a great personal experience as part of the UNCG Genetic Counseling Program and feel lucky to be able to be an active part of the experience for other students," Amy shared. "With each student rotation I learn something about myself as a genetic counselor and as a supervisor. Just as supervisors strive to help

Professional Updates from Alumni

Class of 2002

Amy (Truscello) Mottola: I am still working as a full time Senior Genetic Counselor and Clinic Supervisor for Duke Perinatal Consultants of Raleigh and Duke Perinatal Consultants of Cary. I very much enjoy my job and have managed to find a happy balance between work and family. At home, my three boys- Ryan (almost 7), Brayden (almost 5) and Collin (almost 2)- keep us very busy. Our house is a very loud, high energy, but fun place to be. I never imagined I would know so much about cars/trucks, superheroes and weapons! Life is about to get even crazier because we are expecting our 4th boy in December!

Randi Culp Stewart: See Faculty Updates.



Class of 2002



Class of 2003

Class of 2003

Angela Schwab: For the past 5 years, I have been working at Intermountain Healthcare in Salt Lake City, UT as a Project Manager and Clinical Research Investigator. I oversee the progress of more than 75 clinical trials and research projects in the Cardiovascular Research Department. I am heavily involved in the planning of an Innovation Center at our facility, which we hope to open in 2014. I also network with professionals and philanthropic donors in the region to raise money for research. To continue my professional development, I am in the process of gaining my Project Management Professional Certification. On a personal note, I still have my 2 dogs, Shorty and Julie, and have continued traveling the world! In September, I spent 2 weeks in Spain and Portugal. It was absolutely beautiful; full of culture, wonderful people, and amazing architecture! I hope to go to Australia or New Zealand this spring.

Heidi Cope: I am excited to share that I have been awarded the 2013 Audrey Heimler Special Projects Award! This award will allow me to investigate the psychological impact of pregnancy loss due to prenatally diagnosed lethal fetal conditions. My interest in this topic arose from years of working in NTD research with participants who lost a pregnancy to anencephaly. I continue to work at the Duke Center for Human Genetics (over nine years now). Currently, I coordinate the Hereditary Basis of Neural Tube Defects and The Genetics of Chiari Type I Malformation studies. I am also a part of the Duke Neonatal Genomics Task Force, which is an exome sequencing study of fetuses and neonates with unexplained congenital anomalies.

Class of 2003

Jennifer Dickerson: Professional update: I'm getting ready to enter my 6th year at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis where I continue to offer neurogenetic counseling to families with mitochondrial disease, muscular dystrophies and other neurogenetic syndromes. I supervise GC grad students through the IUPUI program and have gained the reputation as the "psychosocial supervisor." I enjoy my role in their training and hope that I can continue to equip students as they hone their psychosocial counseling skills!

Personal update: I'm going to be a mommy! I started the adoption process last year and, after a devastating fall-through over the summer, hope to bring home a baby boy in mid-December. The birth parents live in Indianapolis and are including me in the prenatal appointments and labor/delivery - what a blessing for an adoptive mom! I'm also going to be an aunt again - my brother and sister-in-law are expecting their 2nd son, due at the end of January.

Eddie Williams: I am entering my 10th year with LabCorp here in RTP, NC. Currently, I am working as the Genetic Service Manager. Our department has a total of 14 Genetic Counselors (and 7 UNC-G grads).

I continue to live in Durham, NC, with my wife (Annie) and my almost two years old son (he'll be two in December). I've included a recent picture of him playing at the Pumpkin Patch we visited last weekend.

Teresa Blake: I am still at the Fort Saunders Perinatal Clinic. My daughter Evalyn is 5 and son Zachary is now 3 years-old. I am still a bleeding heart for taking in stray dogs.

Class of 2004

Adam Buchanon: My wife Holly and I will enjoy celebrating 10 years of marital bliss this coming March in Quebec City. Megan (4) and Gavin (14 months) are adorable and lots of fun!

Class of 2005

Kelly Schoch: I continue to enjoy coordinating the 22q11 deletion syndrome clinic and research studies at Duke. The NC 22q support group remains active, and we were happy to publish a booklet this year called "Growing up with 22q". I've also enjoyed seeing families in our Sequencing Clinic, where we employ whole exome sequencing for children with unexplained medical or cognitive problems. On a personal note, our family celebrated Bryan's graduation from college and our 10 year wedding



Class of 2004



Class of 2005

Class of 2007

Linda (Smith) Carey: I have been working at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin for the past 4 years, and love it. I specialize in metabolic diseases, lysosomal storage diseases, newborn screening, mitochondrial disease and cystic fibrosis. I follow both pediatric and adult patient populations. I am part of the State of Wisconsin Newborn Screening Committee for Metabolic disorders. Community service includes after school tutoring of homeless children to encourage continued success in education. I was married one year ago to long time love, Rick. We have one dog, Mollie the Collie, and three spoiled cats.



Class of 2007



Class of 2008

Class of 2008

Emily Rettner: I have been working at Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland for 4 years, with a focus on Pediatric Medical Genetics. I also participate in the Craniofacial Panel and Skeletal Dysplasia Clinic. I am currently writing 3 case reports on patients with rare microduplication/microdeletion syndromes, with the intention of submitting for publication. I participate in the NSGC, and attended the AEC last year; and plan to do the same next year (sorry, I'll miss you all this year!).

This year, I completed my first half-marathon. I ran the San Francisco Half Marathon with Team Parkinson, and helped to raise money and awareness for Parkinson's disease. I also completed my first triathlon, which was a lot of fun! Those who know me, recall that I baked a lot in graduate school. I entered a cake decorating contest for the San Rafael State Fair for the 2nd year in a row, and won my division! I also bake cupcakes/cakes for co-workers. I have also found an interest in making bread from scratch.

Rachel Mills: This year has been exciting for me! I am still working at Duke University and was promoted to Clinical Research Coordinator II this summer (just a small step up from CRCI, but any step up is a good one!). I completed my research project on patient use of genomic testing for Type 2 Diabetes--I'll be presenting a poster with some of the data at NSGC this year. And I will soon be starting a project encouraging the use of pharmacogenetic testing in a clinical setting. I've been published twice as a contributing author for other projects I've worked on, and I was the primary author for a piece in AMA's online ethics journal, Virtual Mentor (check it out here: <http://virtualmentor.ama-assn.org/2012/08/ecas1-1208.html>). Last fall I helped plan and coordinate the NCMGA meeting held at Duke. I've also participated in educational endeavors including teaching sixth graders how to take a family history and understand risks for inherited diseases, and talking to students at NCState about the genetic counseling profession and my research in genomic medicine.

Class of 2008

Kate (Watson) Hanauer: I am currently working for Integrated Genetics providing prenatal genetic counseling for a high-volume MFM practice in Charlotte, NC. Within Integrated Genetics, I am working on a project to develop a family history questionnaire for our referring OB practices. I've also been providing educational lectures to referring practices on Fragile X and SMA carrier testing. Within the past year, my husband and I have moved to Fort Mill, SC.

Jackie Powers: I current work at UPenn's cancer center as a clinical genetic counselor and research coordinator for our whole exome and IMPACT studies. I still enjoy the running scene and hope to get back to it after ACL repair surgery in November! Loving Philly especially our new MLS team, the Philly Union!

Claire Healy-Hibbard: I am still working at Dana Farber Cancer Institute in cancer genetics. We are building a large satellite clinic service which keeps me very busy. Our daughter helps us laughing at all times.

Class of 2009

Asheley Supik: I am working as a cancer counselor for Riverside Health System in Hampton Roads Virginia in a position that I created. I had such a wonderful experience putting on my business woman hat to sell the position to the administrators and set it all up, but it has been nice to get settled in and provide clinical counseling over the past year. I have focused my volunteer work on licensure efforts both locally and through the NSGC and am taking over as co-chair of the VaAGC's licensure committee. I also got married a few weeks ago to my wonderful new husband Matthew Smith.

Tomi Toler: In July 2011 I married by best friend Graham Tilburey, a wonderful man from Basingstoke, England. I currently work at Massachusetts General Hospital in the Division of Medical Genetics as a general genetic counselor and program coordinator in the Comprehensive Down Syndrome Program. I enjoyed Boston at the NSGC AEC!

Class of 2009

Diana Smith: I have been at Cincinnati Children's Hospital for 3 years now where I continue to work in the Fetal Care Center of Cincinnati as well as our Hereditary Cancer Program. The Fetal Care Center is also again hosting our "Fetology" conference this year where a colleague and myself will be presenting on "Genetic Counseling Concepts in the Pregnancy Complicated by Fetal Congenital Heart Defects (CHD)". Our Hereditary Cancer Program is still very active as we have several on-site clinics, two satellite locations and contract with 3 outside hospitals. We are gearing up to host our 3rd Annual BRCA Carrier Conference this coming March. This is a free conference to individuals with BRCA mutations and their family/support persons to hear updated information on a range of pertinent topics from area physicians. Our Hereditary Cancer Program also works closely with our local FORCE chapter to host support/discussion groups throughout the year. Most recently, our Division of Human Genetics has partnered with Ophthalmology to start a multi-disciplinary clinic beginning in 10/2012 of which I will be participating. We are looking forward to better serving this population by offering combined services as well as molecular genetic research opportunities to help expand our understanding of these conditions. As for a personal update, I moved across the river in May of this year and now am an official Kentucky resident! While this may have changed my license plate, it has



Class of 2009

Class of 2010

Alexis Carere: I am currently in the second year of my doctoral training in genetic epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, and I'm very excited to be working with Dr. Robert C. Green (PI of the REVEAL Study) and his Genomes2People research group at Brigham & Women's Hospital. This past summer I took full advantage of being a student again and traveled with the Harvard women's choir to perform concerts in Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Croatia.

Kristen Cornell: I am still working as a pediatric counselor at Emory. I am also now the genetic counselor for Emory's metabolic clinic and have been involved with its PKU camp for the past 2 summers. I will also now be supervising genetic counseling students in Emory's first genetic counseling class and welcome any and all tips from previous supervisors!

Holly Taylor: I work in Cytogenetics at LabCorp as a lab counselor. I presented a concurrent paper at NSGC AEC 2012. I am still living in Raleigh, NC and ice-skating.

Brooke Rush: I am working full time in the cytogenetics lab at LabCorp in RTP. My husband and I are still living in Burlington. We recently adopted a new puppy, Isabel, to become new best friends with our Basset hound, Ruby.



Class of 2010

Class of 2011

Jessica Bogacik Watts: I am working as a prenatal and cardiovascular genetic counselor at Centra Health in Lynchburg, VA. Establishing genetic counseling services with Centra's Cardiovascular Group is my newest endeavor, and I see patients for fetal congenital heart defects and for adult cardiovascular disorders. I was married on October 1, 2011 and recently celebrated my one year anniversary with my husband, Drake. Drake and I are happy to announce our new addition to the family, our puppy Piper! Piper was adopted from the Lynchburg Humane Society, and I am currently training Piper to become a Therapy Dog for the community hospital system.

Melanie Hardy: I continue to work as a perinatal genetic counselor at Henrico Doctors' Hospital in Richmond, VA. I have been working with current second year student Erin Eaton as a member of Erin's capstone committee. In addition, I am working as a co-lead of the Outreach Task Force in the Student/New Member SIG through NSGC. I am also working on a committee to write the NSGC guideline on universal carrier screening.

Mallory (Schultz) Sdano: I am living in Salt Lake City and working for Lineagen, Inc as a genetic counselor. At Lineagen, I provide telephone genetic counseling to families having our CMA and fragile X testing, field questions from physicians, and write up detailed test results documents for the families/physicians. I recently joined the Scientific Advisory Board for the 4p-Support Group and attended their 2012 conference in Indianapolis, IN. Currently, I am working with my capstone committee to (finally) get my capstone project published. I am also working on a poster for the 2012 NSGC meeting in Boston (please stop by and say hi!). Matt and I celebrated our 1 year wedding anniversary in July and are loving all of Utah's outdoor recreation opportunities.

Class of 2012

Ryan Noss: I am working at the Cleveland Clinic as a General Pediatric and Adult Genetic Counselor. I am the genetic counselor for the Cleveland Clinic's Multidisciplinary Spina Bifida Clinic as well as involved in Whole Exome Sequencing Consenting. I am a member of NSGC and a Prospective Student Task Force Leader for NSGC's Student/New Member SIG. I presented my capstone project as a poster at NSGC.

Courtney Kiss: After graduating in May, I accepted a full time cancer genetic counseling position in Pennsylvania. I facilitate a support group for individuals with a genetic susceptibility to cancer.

Julie Jesiolowski: I am living in Raleigh and working as a prenatal genetic counselor covering two maternity leaves at Duke Perinatal Consultants.

Meagan Wiesenhart: I'm working at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I do mainly cancer genetic counseling (including telemedicine) as well as some adult and prenatal counseling. I teach lectures and lead small group activities at the medical school and will soon start supervising genetic counseling students. In addition I also work with a local BRCA support group. I am a member of NSGC and received the honor of the NSGC Best Student Abstract Award with research being used in press release to promote the AEC.

Michelle Burch: I'm working at LabCorp in RTP.



Class of 2012



Class of 2011

Class of 2012

Sara Wienke: I have been working at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, SC as a Program Coordinator since the end of May. The majority of my time is focused on assisting patients with alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency via telephone as the Alpha-1 Association genetic counselor. I also work in one adult and one pediatric cystic fibrosis clinic each week. The remainder of my time is spent working on various research projects dealing with the impact of alpha-1. I am fortunate that my job allows me to travel and speak at various Alpha-1 support groups, education days and the annual national conference which was held in Seattle, WA in June this year. My dogs, Lola and Oliver, and I are thriving in our new home even though we miss Greensboro!

Faculty and Staff Updates

Sally Sprague

I am still enjoying my work with the program as I have for the last 9 years. The best part of my job is getting to know the students, who brighten our days and always keep things interesting. Fred and I are still trying to make a difference in the feral cat population, one cat at a time! Please send me an email sometime to let me know how you are doing and also with any updated contact information. (saspragu@uncg.edu)



HHS Alumni Association in the 2012 Homecoming Parade!
L to R: Randi Stewart, Ryleigh Stewart, Dean Celia Hooper,
Liz Hart (President).



Dr. Terry McConnell

Professional: I continue to write in the areas of ethical theory and medical ethics. Regarding the latter, I have recently published several articles about ethical issues concerning the genetic enhancement of humans.

Personal: I still run regularly, though not as far and not as fast, and I remain a steadfast fan of the St. Louis Cardinals!

Randi Culp Stewart

The past year has been great! I feel settled into my role with the program now thanks to the support of many. I thoroughly enjoy learning more about our constantly changing and advancing profession. Each day seems to offer new opportunities to grow and improve my skills as a teacher, supervisor and mentor thanks to the amazing students, faculty and supervisors that I am fortunate enough to work with. Our pediatric genetics clinic continues to keep Dr. Reitnauer and I busier than ever. My daughter Ryleigh is 3 going on 13. She is already starting to use her toddler counseling skills on Will and I, as many of you probably experience with your little ones as well. She also enjoys playing with her “happy chromosome” from the recent NSGC meeting that our current students picked up for her. It was great to see so many of you in Boston! Thanks to all of you for your contributions to the newsletter!

Congratulations!



Amy Mottola's 3 boys , L to R: Brayden, Collin and Ryan



Sofia Reitnauer strikes a pose!

2010 UCG genetic counseling class from Whitney (Cogswell) Dobek's wedding in October.



Eddie Williams son Owen at the pumpkin patch.



L to R: Amanda Noyes with daughter Audrey, Amanda Padro with daughter Abigail and Rebecca Crimian vacationing together on Bald Head Island.



Katie Farmer (2009), Tomi Toler (2009) and her husband Graham with Matt Smith and Ashley Supik at their wedding in October.



Randi Stewart's 3 year-old daughter: "butterfly fairy mermaid princess" Ryleigh.



Kelly Schoch with husband Bryan at his graduation from college.

Thank you to first year student Becca Johnson (Class of 2014) for her help in creating this newsletter!