



Letter from Nancy

Hello everyone,

I hope you enjoy this issue of our annual alumni newsletter. Many thanks to Randi Stewart, and first year genetic counseling program student Samantha Caldwell for all of their efforts in putting this newsletter together, and to all of our wonderful alumni who contributed articles, updates and photographs. All of us here at UNCG love being able to stay connected with our graduates, and appreciate the emails, cards, photos and other updates that you send throughout the year.

There are now 96 UNCG MS Genetic Counseling program graduates! This past summer I spent some time updating the alumni information on our [program website](#), including the list of where our graduates are employed. I was once again reminded of the varied roles and settings in which our graduates are working. This issue of the newsletter includes several personal and professional updates as well as articles written by two program graduates, Kristen Cornell (Class of 2010) and Mallory (Schultz) Sdano (Class of 2011), describing their unique work experiences.

You can also find updates about Eddie Williams (Class of 2013) who received the 2013 School of HHS Pacesetter Award (see page 6), and Adam Buchanan (Class of 2004) and Kristy Lee (Class of 2002) who were nominated by students in the Class of 2013 as outstanding clinical supervisors. We hope you will also enjoy reading faculty and staff updates (page 19) including an update from Dennis LaJeunesse. Just yesterday, the Class of 2015 enjoyed an end of semester lunch with Dennis.

One of the highlights of this year was being able to honor Nancy Adams by nominating her for the School of Health and Human Sciences Lifetime Legacy Award. You can read more about Nancy's professional achievements on page 7.

The Class of 2013 was well-represented at the 2013 NSGC meeting! All seven graduates had their abstract accepted for poster or platform presentation. This was entirely to their credit, but we have in recent years provided a different level of support for student research projects by offering a Capstone Seminar Series - lectures and discussions about the various aspects of completing capstone projects - from identifying research questions through preparing the final report. We are pleased that the number of manuscripts submitted for publication have also increased in the past few years.

Randi and I always consider our students to be our future colleagues, and it is a pleasure to be able to continue our relationship with so many of you who supervise our students in clinic and collaborate with them on their capstone projects. The response to a recent email I sent to program alumni to solicit capstone project ideas was overwhelming. What a wonderful way to give back to the program by mentoring current students.



Many of you have also provided shadowing or internship experiences for prospective applicants and we enjoy hearing the good things you have to say about your experiences in the program.

This is also a good time to recognizing the work of our wonderful colleagues throughout North Carolina who support the program by providing guest lectures, supervising students in clinic and collaborating with students on their capstone projects. The success of the program and our students depends on your ongoing support and we are grateful. Special thanks to Dr. Pam Reitnauer. As you may know, Pam was on the Planning Committee for the program and has served as the Medical Director for the program since its inception. Her contributions in the classroom and the clinic, along with the guidance she provides in overall program design, curriculum development and assessment have significantly contributed to the success of the program over the years.

Congratulations to Randi who was elected as President of the School of Health and Human Sciences Alumni Associate Board for 2013-2014. You can read more about the work that Randi is doing with this organization on page 10.

In January I will be starting a three year term on the Board of Directors for the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC). I was honored to be selected for this position and look forward to rolling up my sleeves and working on accreditation issues.

Finally, I am happy to tell you that the Class of 2014 and Class of 2015 are working hard and doing a wonderful job living up to the high standards that have been set by all of you who went before them. We hope that you will show your support for the current students by making a contribution to the Student Enrichment Fund (see page 20 for details). This fund is used entirely to support student professional development. A special thanks to those of you who have made generous contributions in the past.

With fond memories and very best wishes to all of you,

Nancy

Congratulations Class of 2013!



Anna Wessler at Capstone presentations



Class of 2013 celebrating Capstone Day!



Rebecca Fowler at Capstone presentations

Class of 2013 Capstone Projects at NSGC

Platform Presentation

Finley, S.L., McCarthy Veach, P., LeRoy, B., and Callanan, N. Perceptions of Self-Efficacy in Select Supervision Competencies among Clinical Supervisors in Genetic Counseling. Platform Presentation, NSGC, Annual Education Conference, 2013.

Okashah, R., Schoch, K., Shashi, V., and Callanan, N. Knowledge, Understanding and Coping Strategies of Siblings of Children with 22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome. Platform Presentation, NSGC, Annual Education Conference, 2013.

Poster Presentation

Eaton, E., Hardy, M., St. John, J., Vargo, D., and Callanan, N. Perinatal Palliative Care: Perceptions and Practice Barriers of Prenatal Genetic Counselors. Poster Presentation, NSGC, Annual Education Conference, 2013.

Fowler, R., Wilson-Brackett, C., Bollinger, S., and Stewart, R. Billing, Reimbursement and Barriers of the Genetic Counseling CPT Code: The North Carolina Experience. Poster Presentation, NSGC, Annual Education Conference, 2013.

Joseph, K., Buchanan, A., Leedom, T., King, R., and Callanan, N. Application of the NSGC Practice Guidelines for Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer Genetic Counseling to Male Patients. Poster Presentation, NSGC, Annual Education Conference, 2013.

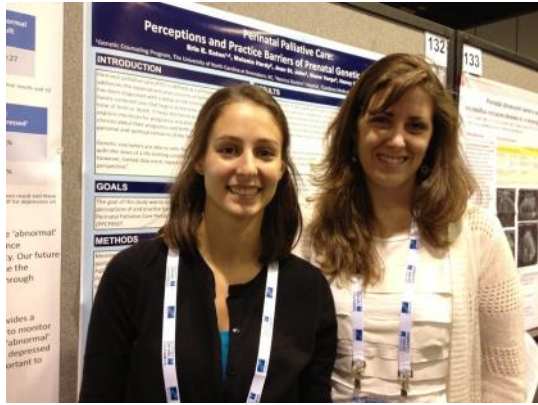
Kendall, A., Stanley, C., Decker, M., and Stewart, R. Standardizations of Nuchal Translucency Assessments: Cut-offs, Recommendations and Counseling Approaches. Poster Presentation, NSGC, Annual Education Conference, 2013.

Wessler, A., Hardisty, E., Easton, M., and Stewart, R. Needs Assessment and Evaluation of Resources Available to Couples Following Termination for Fetal Indications. Poster Presentation, NSGC, Annual Education Conference, 2013.



Ledare Finley presenting at NSGC.

UNCG Alumni and Students at NSGC October 2013 in Anaheim, CA



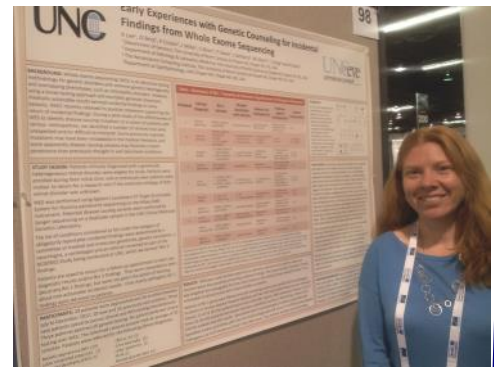
Melanie Hardy and Becky Okashah at poster sessions. Mel presented Erin Eaton's Capstone project.



Kristin Cornell and Kelly East (Class of 2012) at Disneyland's Halloween Party!



Having fun at the UNCG Genetic Counseling Alumni Reunion.



Kristy Lee (Class of 2002) at poster presentations (right).

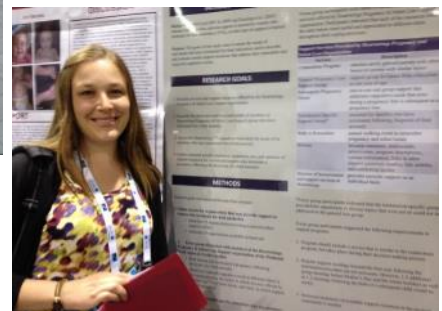


Amy, Ledare and Becky (Class of 2013). Ledare and Becky delivered platform presentations. Amy presented results of her Capstone project at the NSGC Prenatal SIG meeting (above).

Second year students (Class of 2014) enjoying the Anaheim sunshine (right) and meeting alumni at the reunion (below)!



Randi Stewart presenting Anna Wessler's Capstone project (right).



Life at Lineagen: Telephone Genetic Counseling

by Mallory Sdano

When I began searching for my first genetic counseling job, I thought that I did not want to work for a testing laboratory. However, in a wonderful twist of fate I ended up accepting a position with Lineagen, a Salt Lake City based genetic testing company. Lineagen provides chromosomal microarray analysis (CMA) and fragile X syndrome testing for individuals with autism and developmental delays. Lineagen is unique in that we also provide telephone genetic counseling and insurance claims/appeals assistance for the family and ordering physician.

I was reluctant to accept the position at Lineagen because I thought that I would feel unsatisfied performing telephone genetic counseling instead of in-person counseling. However, providing phone counseling has been incredibly fulfilling for me. I am able to use all the counseling skills I learned in graduate school to help patients make the best decision for their family, as well as provide them with any resources they may need. Additionally, there are many benefits to phone counseling that I hadn't considered before, or that I had considered to be a drawback. For example, on the telephone you can't see the patient in front of you to pick up on non-verbal cues, which is often seen as a drawback. However, it can also be a benefit because initial judgments based on a person's appearance (the dreaded countertransference!) are no longer there. Being on the phone is also helpful for me because I have a much harder time controlling my facial expressions compared to controlling my tone of voice. I also look very

young, which often caused my patients in clinic to not take me seriously.

The second reason I was reluctant to accept the position at Lineagen was because I thought a lab job didn't sound very exciting. Boy was I wrong! You never

know what unique test result is going to come back from the lab so I am constantly learning about new conditions, mechanisms, genes, and concepts. Luckily, I work with a group of incredibly smart and talented people who are a great resource and support system for me. Because Lineagen is a small company, I have also had opportunities to be involved in many projects in other departments, such as developing marketing collateral; training new employees; process and product development; insurance grievance calls, external

reviews and appeal letters; presentations to the community about genetic testing; and educating co-workers about genetic testing concepts and technologies.

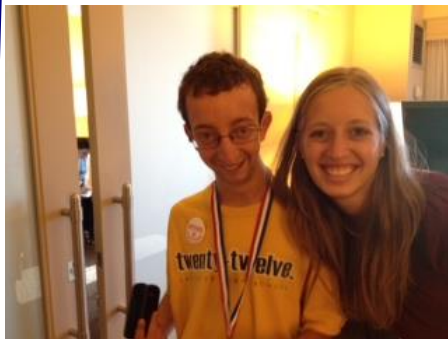
Additionally, Lineagen is an elective rotation site for the students at the University of Utah Graduate Program in Genetic Counseling, allowing me to gain experience as a supervisor and teach the occasional lecture. There is always something new happening at Lineagen so no two days at work are ever the same.

Another unique opportunity I had was the chance to attend the 4p- Support Group National Conference in Indianapolis, IN (July 2012). Due to a special partnership between the Support Group and Lineagen, I was able to have in-person genetic counseling sessions with twelve families. It was so fun getting to meet these incredible families and play with their awesome kids! I am also a member of the 4p- Scientific Advisory Board, whose goals are to identify and conduct studies to further the knowledge of 4p- disorders and how to teach the medical community about these individuals. In this role, I am also able to talk with parents of newly diagnosed children to help answer questions they may have, especially if they haven't been to a genetics appointment yet.

Thank you to the UNCG program for a great genetic counseling foundation that allowed me to thrive in this dynamic, non-traditional role!



Mallory at the Grand Canyon



Mallory and Joe at 4p- Support Group



4p- Support Group National Conference



Wearing Many Hats in the Academic Setting

by Kristen Cornell

girls with PKU for a week.

During the summer in between my two years in the UNCG genetic counseling program, I anxiously awaited getting my clinical rotation schedule. I knew this would determine the next year of my life for sure, and possibly influence the path on which I would start my future career. When I got my schedule and saw that 2 ½ of my 5 rotations would be in the pediatric setting, I was a bit confused. Why did I have more pediatric rotations than my classmates? I had visions of dealing with screaming children, angry parents, incredibly sad cases, and feeling incompetent when something I had never heard of was likely going to be on the schedule every day I was in clinic. I clearly remember meeting with our assistant director Sonja to discuss this. She told me a lot of thought goes into creating these rotation schedules for each individual student. Clearly at that time Sonja knew something I didn't – I would love peds clinic and it would be a great fit for me.

By the time my final semester rolled around and I had already completed 1 1/2 of those rotations, I knew Sonja had been right. I would be looking for peds jobs exclusively, and would be willing to move pretty much anywhere I could get a job that felt like the right fit for me. By April I had received an offer from Emory University to work in their General Genetics clinic. Multiple UNCG grads were working at Emory at the time. Both Nancy and Sonja told me this would be a great first job for me, and that the opportunities provided by a big academic institution such as Emory could open many other doors in the future. So in June, 2010 I officially started as a counselor in the General Genetics clinic at Emory.

The first year proved to be challenging (as I'm sure the first year on any job would be), but I really was loving what I was doing. In the spring of 2011, I was approached by Emory's Metabolic Clinic to take part in their annual Metabolic Camp during the last week of June. I was already familiar with the camp before starting my job at Emory because my capstone project while at UNCG focused on the topic of transition for young adults with PKU, and many of the participants in my study had mentioned attending the camp in the past. But I had no idea just what was in store for me as I served as a "camp counselor" for a group of six 16 year old

Young women from all over the country with PKU and MSUD came to Atlanta for camp, and many come back year after year. There are 4 main goals of the camp: To teach the importance of nutrition and help the campers develop diet self-management skills. To review the treatment recommendations of PKU and MSUD prior to and during pregnancy. To create a place to share experiences and make new friends with other young women who have PKU or MSUD. To research the impact of the above interventions on the transition to adulthood, pregnancy, quality of life, and overall health outcomes. In many ways it's just like any other summer camp. There are dance parties and arts and crafts. Teenage girls giggling over their latest celebrity crushes and sharing meals together. But in many ways things are different. Keeping track of exactly how many grams of Phe are in each of those meals. Discussing tips and tricks for bringing your metabolic formula to school and to birthday parties without drawing unwanted attention to yourself. Sharing what you tell friends when they ask about PKU and thoughts on participating in clinical research. I had opportunities to use my genetic counseling skills to help these young women understand their condition in terms of metabolism and inheritance, as well as why it's vital for them to remain on a special diet for life and the psychosocial implications that come along with having a metabolic condition. Becoming close to these young women allowed them to open up in ways that you generally don't get when sitting in an exam room in clinic. To say that week at camp changed my life would be an understatement.

A few months after my first Metabolic Camp, the opportunity arose for me to become the genetic counselor for Emory's Metabolic Clinic. Since then I have also taken on the role of being the Genetic Counselor Consultant for the state of Georgia's Newborn Screening program. My work with the metabolic clinic also gave me the opportunity to take part in a national project with the American Academy of Pediatrics exploring the role of genetics in primary care. In addition, Emory University has started its own genetic counseling training program which means I'm now serving as a primary supervisor for genetic counseling students as they complete their general genetics rotations. With all these additional hats I'm wearing, unfortunately I am no longer able to take a full week out of the office to serve as a Camp counselor again. However, I am still returning to Camp each year to give the Genetics and Transition presentation to the campers (and now I get to bring genetic counseling students with me too!) For more information on Emory's Metabolic Camp, please visit their website (<http://genetics.emory.edu/metcamp/>). I'm so grateful for the support and guidance that Nancy and Sonja provided back while I was a student (which continues even now 3 years out of the program) and look forward to finding more "hats" to wear as I continue down my career path at Emory. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or just to say "hi!"

Kristen Cornell, MS, CGC

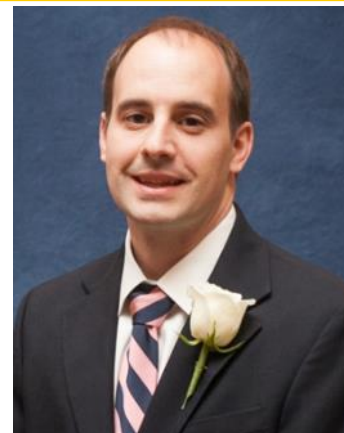
Email: Kristen.Cornell@emoryhealthcare.org

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2013 Alumni Association Award Recipients

The School of Health and Human Sciences Alumni Association held its second annual Awards Reception on April 13, 2013 in order to recognize distinguished alumni from its 10 departments and programs that have made significant contributions in their respective fields. We are honored to announce that two genetic counselors were chosen as awards recipients this year. Congratulations to **Nancy Adams**, who was selected to receive the **HHS Lifetime Achievement Award!** Congratulations to **Eddie Williams** who was selected for the **Pacesetter Award!** Nancy and Eddie are featured here in order to highlight their remarkable and inspiring accomplishments. Their nomination letters were beautifully written by Nancy Callanan, which are incorporated into these feature articles.

HHS Pacesetter Award: Eddie Williams



A Pacesetter Award is presented to an outstanding alumnus in the School of HHS who has attained local, state or regional recognition through their achievements in scholarship, leadership or service during their career or through civic involvement. **Eddie Williams (Class of 2003)** and his professional achievements are deserving of such accolades!

Eddie received his undergraduate degree in Biology from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA in 1999 and received his MS in Genetic Counseling from UNCG in 2003. During his time at UNCG he completed a Capstone Project entitled "Perceived Need for Genetic Education among Health Professional Graduate Students at UNC Greensboro". Eddie's early interest in the genetics education needs of healthcare providers perhaps foreshadowed the focus of his professional activities as a genetic counselor. "For me, the educational component of genetic counseling was one of the many appealing features of the profession," says Williams. "Working with our healthcare providers and focusing on their genetics education allows for the highest quality of patient care."

Following graduation he took a position in the Genetic Services Department at the LabCorp Center for Molecular Biology and Pathology in Research Triangle Park. In 2003, the role of a "laboratory" genetic counselor was still evolving. As a laboratory genetic counselor, Eddie applied his knowledge of clinical genetics and his communication and educational skills by serving as an educator and resource for physicians, nurses, genetic counselors and other healthcare providers regarding genetic testing and genetic conditions. Just three years later, 2006, he was promoted to the position of Technical Supervisor of Genetic Services where he was responsible for the daily operations of the Genetic Services department. This included providing supervision for 14 direct reports including other genetic counselors and Customer Service professionals. He assumed greater responsibilities for educating the LabCorp sales representatives and collaborating with the marketing department to draft technical literature for healthcare providers and patient education materials.

Within 4 years, Eddie was once again promoted – this time to the position of Manager of Genetic Services. In this position provides oversight for 40 employees including laboratory based genetic counselors, Customer Services representatives and Maternal Serum Screening Customer Services. He provides project management of new genetic test launches including technical and patient education literature and training of LabCorp employees. "I really enjoy watching the growth and achievements of the individuals in my Genetic Services department and I hope that I have contributed in some way. I also enjoy watching how the

evolving and ever-increasing complexity of the lab technology with genetic testing." shares Eddie. While Eddie's career path over the past 10 years clearly shows the recognition of his talents and a rapid progression to increased managerial responsibilities, one underlying theme is his role in providing education for healthcare providers, other service providers, and, through the development of educational materials, patients.

Throughout this time, Eddie has also been directly involved in providing a crucial educational experience for students enrolled in our Genetic Counseling program by coordinating educational shadowing experiences for all first year students. He proposed, designed and implemented an elective Summer Laboratory Internship for students in our program. These experiences are valued by our students and have inspired several of our graduates to seek positions as laboratory counselors. As genetic testing of all types continues to become an integral part of healthcare, an increasing number of genetic counselors will inevitably follow in Eddie's footsteps by assuming relevant positions in the genetic testing industry. This trend underscores the need for additional training in this expanding area of practice for genetic counselors. Eddie recently approached the UNCG Genetic Counseling program with a suggestion to develop a full supervised rotation in laboratory genetic counseling for our students. Although most supervised clinical training for genetic counseling students remains focused on traditional clinical roles, this elective rotation has and continues to be an attractive option for students enrolled in the UNCG Genetic Counseling program. "The opportunity to work with students is very rewarding," says Eddie. "We hope to offer them our knowledge, tools and resources that will help them be successful as they begin their professional careers."

Eddie's other accomplishments include developing class room instruction materials and activities on basic genetics for local middle school students and participating as Team Captain for the LabCorp Genetic Services group in a recent March of Dimes "March for Babies". He has contributed to various professional publications and abstracts presented at national meetings in order to help educate the genetics community. Eddie is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of East Carolina while working full-time. "I think and hope that this will make me a better co-worker, manager and advocate for our genetic counselors working at LabCorp and all of the health care professionals with which we work" he describes.

Eddie has been an outstanding role model for our students, and has extended his expertise nationally as a member of the National Society of Genetic Counselors Industry Special Interest Group. We are very pleased to recognize his accomplishments as the **2013 HHS Alumni Association Pacesetter Award Recipient!**

HHS Lifetime Legacy Award: Nancy Adams

The **HHS Lifetime Legacy Award** is a prestigious award reserved for an alumnus who has served as a pioneer in his/her field of study and who has tirelessly given of his/her treasure through time or talents spanning a number of decades. No one has been a more extraordinary pioneer in their academic and professional career than **Nancy J. Adams**. Nancy is credited with bringing the profession of genetic counseling to North Carolina almost 35 years ago.

Nancy Adams received her undergraduate degree in Nutrition from UNCG in 1960. After several years of relevant employment, she became interested in the emerging health field of genetic counseling. At that time, only two graduate programs in the U.S. offered graduate programs in genetic counseling – one at Sarah Lawrence College in New York and the other at the University of California Berkeley. Undaunted, Nancy returned to UNCG and created her own graduate program. With support from the Department of Biology, she created a plan of study and clinical practicum that resembled the genetic counseling programs offered at the other institutions and received her MS degree in Biology with a focus on Human Genetics in 1977. “The best way to predict the future is to create it,” says Nancy. It is easy to see why this is one of her favorite sayings. Following her graduation she was employed in the Division of Genetics and Metabolism at UNC-Chapel Hill as the **first genetic counselor in North Carolina**. Her academic achievements and clinical experiences qualified her to be among the first genetic counselors to be certified by the American Board of Medical Genetics in 1982.

Nancy Adams was always “ahead of the curve” with regards to genetic counseling. In 1980, when one of the earliest prenatal screening programs was introduced in North Carolina, Nancy Adams was hired to establish and manage the program in 13 counties in North Carolina. This was no easy task. She literally went door-to-door educating obstetricians and other health care providers about the program, establishing protocols for obtaining samples, reporting results, and following up on abnormal findings. She created educational materials for patients and providers, and personally provided the follow up counseling and testing for woman with positive screening results. This type of screening is now routinely offered to pregnant woman throughout the United States. But Nancy Adams was, in fact, one of the pioneers in establishing this type of screening program.

In the early 1980s, most genetic counselors worked in clinical positions in academic medical centers. But this didn't stop Nancy Adams from leaving the university environment to apply her skills not only as a genetic counselor, but in marketing, business and management, as a co-founder, Vice President and General Manager of the first private prenatal diagnostic clinic in North Carolina. As such, Nancy was able to provide genetics services to clients in a less institutionalized environment, with a focus on meeting the individual needs of clients seeking these services. Once again a pioneer, she informally mentored many genetic counselors who were seeking opportunities to apply their skills in

genetic counseling in non-traditional settings. “Be flexible and learn how to market yourself,” Nancy wisely advises the next generation of genetic counselors. “You may find yourself in a place where there is no position for a genetic counselor. Try to create one for yourself. I call this ‘bloom where you’re planted.’”

But Nancy Adams' story does not end there. A few years later, she was the first genetic counselor employed Laboratory Corporation of North Carolina in Burlington and Research Triangle Park where she was hired to establish the Genetic Services Department for this national laboratory. In this position, she developed materials that would be used to provide education about genetic testing and counseling for patients and physicians throughout the United States. She later provided training for sales representatives, physicians and other health care providers on a national level. When she “retired” from this position her title was Associate Vice President and Director of Genetic Services.

Not surprisingly, Nancy Adams would not stay long-retired. She decided to return to her roots and sought opportunities to get back to the clinic to work with individuals and families. But, always the pioneer, this time it meant introducing cancer genetic counseling services at the community level in Greensboro, NC at the Regional Cancer Center of the Cone Health System. Nancy Adams was successful in documenting the need to have these services available at the local level, and was ultimately hired to provide these crucial services to individuals and families with inherited forms of cancer.

In the fall of 2000, North Carolina established a graduate program in Genetic Counseling of its own at UNCG, with Nancy Adams as integral member of the planning committee! For the past 12 years, she has provided opportunities for our genetic counseling students to observe, learn, and practice genetic counseling in a supervised clinical rotation. Each year all first year students have had the privilege of observing Nancy Adams in clinic, and several second year students benefited from her individual mentoring as a clinical supervisor. Nancy has been an exemplary role model because in addition to her many talents and accomplishments throughout her professional career, she remains a compassionate and skillful health care provider – a “master” genetic counselor. “Always take time to build rapport with your patients,” says Nancy. “You may have explained breast cancer or Down syndrome a thousand times but it may be the first time your patient ever heard of it.” She continues to remain actively involved in our program as a member of the External Advisory Committee.

Nancy Adams has made a significant impact on the field of genetic counseling, not only in North Carolina, but throughout the United States. We are honored to publically acknowledge the significant contributions and achievements that Nancy has made in her lifetime as the **HHS Lifetime Legacy Award Recipient!**



Supervisor Spotlights

The UNCG Genetic Counseling Program is fortunate to have devoted clinic supervisors that are personally invested in the development of our students. We are honored to feature two supervisors this year; each were nominated by two students in the Class of 2013!

Adam Buchanan

Nominated by: Ledare Finley & Becky Okashah

"Adam Buchanan was one of my supervisors at Duke Cancer. He is a wonderful role model who is passionate about his work as a genetic counselor. Adam not only taught me how to tailor information to the needs of the patient but also worked diligently to encourage me to expand and utilize my psychosocial counseling skills which allowed me to build my confidence with each session and throughout my rotation at Duke Cancer. He was always encouraging and answered any question that I may have had and explored even when he had a busy day planned. Additionally, Adam was concerned about the self-care of his students as he discussed professional issues like countertransference and how it is important to talk about these issues with colleagues and supervisors. Adam really listens to the needs of his patients and continues to contribute to the cancer genetics through research. I am very lucky that I got to rotate at Duke Cancer and with Adam Buchanan."

- Becky Okashah

"I worked with Adam during my Cancer rotation at Duke and I really enjoyed learning about cancer counseling with him. Adam helped me think about psychosocial counseling and how to seamlessly incorporate it into the session. After working with Adam, I felt more confident talking to patients about their emotional support needs and other psychosocial issues related to their cancer diagnosis or testing result. Adam was very encouraging to me during the job search process after I graduated as well and continues to be a mentor as I begin my career in cancer counseling. I feel very fortunate to have worked with Adam and consider him a role model for my position as a genetic counselor with a research role." - Ledare Finley



Adam graduated from the UNCG Genetic Counseling training program in 2004 and has worked at the Duke Hereditary Cancer Clinic since then. He began supervising UNCG students in 2006 after passing the board exam in 2005. Adam has mentored our students in a variety of ways including serving on several Capstone Project committees. It is obvious that he values his own training as well as the training of his students. "I feel strongly that having a well-trained genetic counselor involved in a patient's care makes that care better. So, I try to do my own small part to add to that training," says Buchanan. "Supervising students makes me a better genetic counselor. It helps me to see cases through students' eyes and make sure that we are offering patients the breadth and depth of care that genetic counseling can provide." Adam offers the following perspective that he strives to maintain in approaching supervision, "I try to remember what it was like being a rotating student. Sometimes I was overwhelmed, other times I wanted to do whole sessions

by myself. So, I try to develop an environment in which it's safe for students to tackle what they're comfortable doing, as well as a little of what they not so comfortable with." We appreciate Adam's thoughtful and supportive approach to supervision and we are grateful for his dedication to the training of our students!

Supervisor Spotlights

Kristy Lee

Nominated by: Amy Kendall & Ledare Finley

"I really enjoyed working with Kristy. She always challenged me to take an active role both in session and outside of the session, especially if it was for an indication I had never seen before. I got great exposure in all areas of counseling including pedigree taking, explaining all forms of inheritance, psychosocial counseling, discussing test results, writing patient and provider letters, and prepping for patients (calling to medical records, etc.). She always took the time to give feedback and really challenged us to reflect upon each of our sessions in a constructive manner. The variety of cases we saw and the specialty clinics I got to rotate in with the Adult clinic at Chapel Hill was also an added bonus." - Amy Kendall

"Kristy was my supervisor in Adult Clinic, which was my first clinical rotation site. Kristy was a great mentor to me and I was able to perform a diversity of roles during my Adult rotation. I had many opportunities for follow-up with cases and learned about the many ways we can advocate for our patients outside of the traditional genetic counseling session. Kristy was a wonderful role model and installed the desire in me to go above and beyond to help patients cope with their condition. I really started thinking more about what I could do to help patients with resources during my rotation with Kristy and that carried through my other rotations as well. Kristy was a great supervisor and continues to encourage me as I start my career – she shows a genuine interest in my growth and development long after my rotation." - Ledare Finley



Kristy enjoying free time in Anaheim at the NSGC meeting!

Kristy Lee graduated from the UNCG Genetic Counseling Program in 2002. She began with UNC Adult and Cancer Genetics in 2007 following her four year tenure at Greenwood Genetics Center working as a laboratory counselor and seeing patients in adult, cancer, pediatric and prenatal specialties. Kristy recognizes the importance and benefits of student supervision and it shows. "First and foremost I want students to feel welcomed and comfortable. This is imperative for students to have a successful rotation. If you do not take the time to develop some rapport with students, just like you would with your patients, you could be in for a long rotation. I want them to feel like part of our team. In the adult clinic, we are often working with patients that present with puzzling medical histories. It is helpful having another pair of eyes looking at medical records and searching through the literature, so I think this helps students see that we are all learning together oftentimes and that they can and do contribute to patient care." Kristy clearly appreciates all of the positive aspects of student supervision. "Student supervision keeps me on my toes. Students are not the only ones being observed in supervision, so it forces me to think through and sometimes explain certain decisions or ways to present information." Kristy has

been a loyal supporter of our program and contributes to our profession in a number of ways. "I really enjoy having the opportunity to give back to my program and help foster growth of the profession," says Kristy. "Knowing that many of the students I have helped supervise have gone on to start very successful careers and do great things for our profession makes being a supervisor very rewarding for me." Kristy's approach to supervision is an inspiration to us all.

HHS Alumni Association

by Randi Culp Stewart

In December 2011, I was asked to join the newly formed School of HHS Alumni Association Board of Directors. (Thanks, Eileen!) Until that moment I did not know that HHS had an Alumni Association or that I was already part of this family. I also did not understand the goals of the Association or why it should be important to me or our program. Well, much has changed since then. I have greatly enjoyed getting to know board members including our fearless leader and first President Liz Hart (Kinesiology '93) and other alumni. I have particularly enjoyed connecting our program and program alumni with this organization. I would like to share what I have learned in the last 1 ½ years about the value of this organization. **The purpose of this article is to help familiarize you with our HHS Alumni Association and how it may benefit, interest and involve you.**

1. The **purpose** of the association is to provide opportunities for alumni of the School to connect and to enjoy events on and off campus. I feel confident in saying that we accomplish this goal and the value of these connections is immeasurable. Each new alumnus that we meet at an event and each new member that joins the board adds unique perspective and insight, united desire to give back to UNCG and have fun! We all have a common background and professional interests that are similar in many ways. Not only are our interactions enjoyable but they create opportunities for networking and personal and professional collaborations.

2. We are always interested in meeting new alumni and hearing new ideas! Here is an opportunity to **be creative and be heard!**



3. We have had a strong presence at **UNCG Homecoming** the past two years. From a completely unbiased opinion, I assure you that we had the best tent in show! Service therapy animals provided by Deborah Meridith from Community and Therapeutic Recreation not only brought smiles to the faces of

children and adults alike, but they attracted large crowds of people to come to talk about HHS including the Genetic Counseling Program. In fact, the winner of our drawing for a \$100 gift card to the UNCG bookstore was a freshman Biology major at UNCG who is interested in becoming a genetic counselor!

4. Each department and program in HHS is represented on our Alumni Association t-shirts in a **"family tree"**. How many genetic counselors can resist a family tree?!

5. While the focus of our association is alumni, we also have a **strong interest in students** currently enrolled in the programs



and departments of the School of HHS. In fact, at our last board meeting a new committee was created to explore how our Alumni Association can provide support to students. Stay tuned!

6. There are many fun **social events** that we plan including morning coffees and Happy Hours. We enjoy collaborating with the UNCG Alumni Association on these events and others such as "Spartan Spot" group gatherings for men's basketball games and women's basketball game receptions.

7. Our meetings are frequently attended by various guests that engage us in **campus and community service projects**. This is a great way to make a difference in the community and even on a personal level with individuals in need.

8. It goes without saying that our quarterly **board meetings** tend to be quite animated. We strive for representation from all departments and programs. I would be thrilled if some of our local program alumni would join us at an upcoming meeting! Please email me if you are interested. I have to brag and say how proud I am that many of our board members actually understand what genetic counselors do and what we contribute to health care. How refreshing!

9. With the broad representation of board members and alumni from various departments and programs, even those from former Schools or departments that have been renamed or realigned, there is constant exposure to the rich history of our university, innovative research and promising ways to approach the future of health care.

10. Our **Annual Awards Reception** each spring is amazing! This evening event is not only fun and entertaining but it is a gift to be able to recognize our program alumni in this public forum. I continue to be inspired by graduates of our program and I celebrate in your accomplishments with you. Thanks to our HHS Alumni Association, we now have such a meaningful mechanism to reward you for these accomplishments! Please see feature articles on Nancy Adams and Eddie Williams (pages 5-6) for evidence of this. We cannot wait to present next year's award recipient(s) to you!



As you can see, the HHS Alumni Association has much to offer all of its alumni including you! As the President of the HHS Alumni Association for 2013-2014, I personally invite you to visit our website at <http://www.uncg.edu/hhs/alumni-association> to learn more about us, embrace your inner Spartan alumnus and come join us at an upcoming event or board meeting! The next meeting will be on Monday January 13, 2014 at 5:30pm. Thank you to Celia Hooper, Dean of HHS, as well as Frankie Jones and Eileen Miller. Our Alumni Association would not be possible without your support!

Professional Updates from Alumni

Class of 2002

Randi Culp Stewart: See Faculty Updates.

Kristy Lee: See Supervisor Spotlight.



Class of 2002

Class of 2003

Angela Schwab: This is my 6th year at the Intermountain Heart Institute in Murray, UT. I work as the Project Manager for the Cardiovascular Research Department. One of my biggest accomplishments this year has been the development of a research app called iDiscover. It is being used to consent and collect data for our investigator-initiated clinical trials. iDiscover is an all-encompassing electronic database that has transformed clinical trials from a paper laden archaic process to a stream-lined electronic, portable solution with built in compliance measurements. I am also working hard to grow our cardiovascular bio repository and network with other facilities to conduct collaborative research. In my personal life, Shorty and Julie, my two pit bulls are still doing great! I am also very busy traveling (especially to the Caribbean and Central America), enjoying all the outdoor activities in Utah, and staying physically active.

Class of 2003

Ashley Volz: I am currently working as a Senior Medical Science Liaison for BioMarin Pharmaceuticals, Inc. I am also managing several Independent Research Trials involving PKU, MPS VI and MPS IVA. My most recent publication, published in the Journal of Genetic Counseling, was titled, "Practical Aspects of Recruitment and Retention in Clinical Trials of Rare Genetic Diseases: The Phenylketonuria (PKU) Experience."

Megan Harlan-Fleischut: I have been working at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York for over 7 years now. I'm always learning and continuing to grow into my position as our Service's Lead Genetic Counselor. I have been particularly proud of my colleagues and the collaborations that we have been a part of, which resulted in two exciting recent publications. First, A recurrent germline PAX5 mutation confers susceptibility to pre-B cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia published in *Nature Genetics*. Second, A recessive founder mutation in regulator of telomere elongation helicase 1, RTEL1, underlies severe immunodeficiency and features of Hoyeraal Hreidarsson Syndrome, published in *PLOS Genet*.



Class of 2003

Class of 2003

Teresa Blake: I continue to work at the Ft. Sanders Perinatal Center as a prenatal genetic counselor. Six years and counting! Our practice has expanded from the main office in Knoxville, TN to include three outreach clinics in Crossville, Morristown, and Sevierville. With this expansion, we are adding a third genetic counselor (and maybe a fourth genetic counselor) to our practice in 2014. The home life with a 6 year old daughter and 4 year old son keeps me on my toes. When not at work, we spend as much time as a family on the lake wakeboarding, waterskiing, and wake surfing!

Heidi Cope: I have been working at the Duke Center for Human Genetics for over ten years now (boring update, I know). My primary role is coordinating two research studies; the Hereditary Basis of Neural Tube Defects and the Genetics of Chiari Type I Malformation studies. I am also a part of the Duke Task Force for Neonatal Genomics, which is an exome sequencing study of fetuses and neonates with unexplained congenital anomalies.

Jennifer Dickerson: Professionally, not much has changed. I continue to work in Neurogenetics at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis - I can't believe I've been here for almost 6 years! The GC students from the IUPUI program have a rotation with me and I enjoy working with them (even though they're all intimidated by the concept of neuro). Personally, life is dramatically different than this time last year. In December, I had the privilege of assisting my son's birth mom in his delivery. Daniel Jude Dickerson was born on 12/7/12. Daniel is a sweet baby who is full of joy and smiles. He loves to eat (and get messy) and will try anything! I love being his mom :)



Class of 2004

Class of 2004

Vanessa Rangel Miller: I am the Vice President of Genetic Services at PatientCrossroads. PatientCrossroads offers web-based registries for more than 250 rare diseases and power the NCATS/NIH's Global Rare Diseases (Patient) Registry and Data Repository (GRDR) and the recently launched NICHD/NIH Down Syndrome registry. PatientCrossroads is a full partner in Europe's RD-CONNECT program ensuring global, open access to patient-provided medical histories. On behalf of PatientCrossroads, I lead our interests in these influential programs as well as programs for our pharmaceutical clients including BMS, Novartis, Shire and others. I also participate in the ABGC finance committee. On a personal note, we bought our first house in Kirkland (suburb of Seattle) this year.

Adam Buchanan: Professionally I am still working at Duke, but that's nothing new. I am still loving my family, my dog, riding my bike and chocolate! My wife and I celebrated our 10th anniversary in Quebec City where I realized I am not as good at skiing as I thought I would be.

Class of 2005

Jill (Greisbach) Polk: I have been at Hillcrest Hospital (Cleveland Clinic) for the past eight years where I have developed a cancer genetics program at a community hospital. I am also on the program staff at The Gathering Place, an organization for individuals touched by cancer, and run two support groups for children- Kidshop (for kids with a family member with cancer) and Bridges (a bereavement group for kids.) I live happily in Cleveland Heights, Ohio with my husband, Shane, 3 kiddos- Parker (5), Remy (3), and Cora (9 months), and 2 dogs. In my free time I create custom order handmade children's clothing for little ladies through my clothing line mamabeanjill. I enjoyed reconnecting with many classmates at NSGC in Anaheim.

Shannon Morrill-Cornelius: I am the genetic counselor at Danbury Hospital in Connecticut, providing services in oncology and perinatology. My current research interest is the utilization of NGS technology and how it is changing cancer genetics practice. I continue to supervise students for the Sarah Lawrence program, and I am excited by their maturity and enthusiasm for the profession. Brad and I live in Southbury, CT and are enjoying all that the seasons have to offer in New England. Our son, Sawyer, started Kindergarten this year. We also welcomed another son, Cooper, to the family in April. Life is busy, but full of blessings.

Courtney Rowe-Teeter: I joined the Stanford Cancer Genetics Clinic in July, 2013. It was bitter-sweet to leave the program I established and successfully grew at the Thompson Cancer Survival Center in Knoxville, TN, but I love my new job and colleagues at Stanford. The other big plus in this transition is that it affords Ben and me the opportunity to raise our daughter Sophia close to both of our families.



Class of 2005

Class of 2006

Melissa Alderdice: I have been working as a Neurology Product Specialist with Gene Dx for almost 2 years. I really enjoy the business side of the genetics world and Gene Dx is a great company to work for. As a genetic counselor, it was very rewarding to be recognized by Gene Dx as Sales Rep of the Year and I think it shows a lot of other genetic counselors that our skills are very translatable to other fields within Genetics. I am living in the Dallas area with my son, Zavier. He will be 3 on Halloween and is the silliest and sweetest boy ever!

Christy (McPhillips) Odom: I am working at St. Jude part time since the birth of my second child, Eliza last fall. I see patients with pediatric cancers and hematologic diseases. I work on a variety of research projects, most commonly with retinoblastoma. We are starting a project soon that will involve whole genome sequencing for tumor and germline of our pediatric cancer patients. I am a member of NSGC and the cancer SIG as well as the Tennessee Genetic Counselors Association.



Class of 2006

Class of 2007

Rebecca Crimian: Professionally, I am currently working at the Center for Human Genome Variation at Duke University. We are primarily focused on whole exome sequencing in patients with undiagnosed genetic disorders, schizophrenia/mental illness, epilepsy, and ALS. It is very exciting work and I am very happy to be a part of it. Personally, I recently got married Labor Day weekend of this year. The wedding was on the North Carolina Coast and I was very fortunate to have some of my 2007 UNCG class able to attend. Scott and I are living in Raleigh with our 3 dogs and very much enjoying married life.

Larisa Baumanis: I am working at University Hospitals of Cleveland, primarily as a prenatal counselor with pediatric specialty clinic involvement (CF newborn screening and Hematology). I participate in NSGC and supervise students in the CWRU genetic counseling program. On a personal note, I recently completed my second marathon! Planning my third in April 2014—training to commence shortly!

Kasey Platky: I got married in September 2011 and we bought a house November 2012. No kids quite yet, except our one dog. I am still at University of Louisville focusing on prenatal and do CMAs also.



Class of 2007



Class of 2008

Class of 2008

Claire Healy-Hibbard: I'm still working at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. My main responsibilities include the administration and coordination of genetic counseling services in Dana Farber's various satellite clinics across Massachusetts, New Hampshire and soon Connecticut. I'm also involved in a research study titled "Inherit EGFR - Investigating Hereditary Risk from T790M: A multi-centered study to identify and characterize individuals carrying germline EGFR mutations." My colleague Kathy Schneider and I submitted an abstract to NSGC titled "The spectrum of tumors in a small series of adult and pediatric oncology patients with DICER1 mutations", that was presented at this year's AEC. It has been a very rewarding and very busy year professionally. My husband and I celebrated our 4th year of marriage this September and are gearing up for a Care Bear themed birthday bash to celebrate our daughter's third birthday in February.

Emily Rettner: I am still working at Children's Hospital Oakland in the Medical Genetics Division. I've been taking on several volunteers who are interested in genetic counseling, two of whom are now CGC's! This year, I completed my second time performing supervision for a GC student, which was pretty great. In non-work news, my fiancé and I just bought a house, and will be married in late September!

Class of 2008

Rachel Mills: I am working as a Clinical Research Coordinator in the Institute of Genome Sciences and Policy at Duke University. I work primarily with Dr. Susanne Haga and we have recently finished a project assessing the use of pharmacogenomic testing in a clinical setting. My research interests include patient and physician use of genetic and genomic information and how literacy and genetic knowledge affect understanding and application of this information. I am also interested in the policy aspects of genomic testing, specifically uses of new technology like whole genome and exome sequencing. I have been published a number of times in the past year including a recent publication in the Journal of Genetic Counseling on the future of Genomic Counseling. I regularly attend the NC Medical Genetics Association meetings. I am still living in Durham, NC with my dog Beau and enjoy the great local art, music, beer and food.

Class of 2009

Tomi Toler: Professionally, I still work at Massachusetts General Hospital in the Medical Genetics Clinic and as the Program Coordinator of the Down Syndrome Program. I've started seeing patients in a multidisciplinary sensorineural hearing loss clinic at Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary, which I really enjoy. I recently joined the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Genetic Counselors as a member and look forward to working with that group more in the years to come. I was part of two publications in Molecular Psychiatry and American Journal of Medical Genetics Part A and am currently actively involved in 2 more. On a personal note, my husband and I recently bought a condo and adopted an adorable dog named Ringo, who interestingly enough is from North Carolina and is already a Mizzou fan!

Katie Farmer: After 4 years at UAB, I will be moving back to my hometown to work at the Clinical Genetics Center at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital in a split cancer and pediatric position.

Class of 2009

Diana Smith: I have recently accepted a position at Cleveland Clinic working with an online clinical decision support tool called "MyFamily". The MyFamily tool is a result of collaboration between Cleveland Clinic's Center for Personalized Healthcare and Genomic Medicine Institute. The purpose of the tool is to collect information prior to a primary care physician appointment to allow for optimal review of the information during the appointment. The tool is accessed by both patient and physician through EMR. The platform is currently in the pilot stage and we are aiming to enroll all Cleveland Clinic affiliated internal medicine/family medicine offices as well as select specialty clinics. My main responsibility on the team is to train physicians on the use of the tool and provide patient and physician support for the tool as needed. The non-traditional role is quite different from my previous clinical position in Cincinnati, but I am enjoying the new and different work experience, the new city of Cleveland (at least until Winter comes! J) and my new colleagues – including 3 other UNCG grads!

Lori Carpenter: I'm currently working as an Adult Genetic counselor at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. We have general Adult Genetics clinics as well as several specialty clinics that I see patients in including: Metabolic, Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia, Neuromuscular, Ocular and Congenital Heart Disease. Our group recently published this article: Clinical variability and female penetrance in X-linked familial FTD/ALS caused by a P506S mutation in UBQLN2.



Class of 2009

Class of 2010

Whitney (Cogswell) Dobek: I am still working in Augusta, GA at Georgia Regents Medical Center. I split my time between maternal fetal medicine and reproductive endocrine/infertility clinics. Over the past year, I have been working on a couple research projects on X;Y translocations and decision making regarding NIPT. I also participated on the committee that organized the Georgia Association of Genetic Counselors and our first ever state meeting. In personal news, my husband and I just welcomed our first child, a daughter named Rory Allison.

Kelly East: I am still living in Huntsville, AL and working for the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology. Half of my time is spent doing educational outreach and the other half of my time is working in clinical genomic research. I am heavily involved in the development of an online serious/educational game about complex genetics. I am also part of a pediatric exome sequencing project aimed at making genetic diagnoses in children with undiagnosed developmental delay or other neurologic illness. Secondary aims of the project include learning more about patients' preferences for incidental findings and impact of exome sequencing on parental anxiety and perceived control. This year we have also established a relationship with a local university nursing program, and are hosting all 2nd year nursing students for a half-day learning experience about genomic medicine. On a personal note, I gave birth to a precious red-haired baby boy named Perry in January. So I am staying busy and learning the juggling act of being a working mommy!



Class of 2010



Class of 2011

Class of 2011

Melanie Hardy: I'm a prenatal genetic counselor at Henrico Doctors' Hospital (HCA Healthcare) and am actively involved in palliative care and community education initiatives. I continue to act as a supervisor for VCU GC students and as a capstone committee member for a UNCG student. This year I am co-chair of the Education and Certification Task Force of the Student/New Member SIG in NSGC and our task force is responsible for organizing and presenting an EBS on GC Jobs at the 2013 AEC. We have also organized board exam study groups for students and new grads across the country. I'm also co-chair of the Welcome to AEC (orientation) and will be presenting with my chair to all students and new attendees of the AEC this year. Finally, I will be part of the AEC Outreach initiative group that presents about genetic counseling to AEC-area college students interested in possibly pursuing a GC career

Dana (Faux) Stolar: I married Greg Stolar in Pittsburgh, PA on June 15, 2013! UNCG friends in attendance were Mallory Schultz Sdano, Melanie Hardy, Michael Osborne, and Emily Walsh. We live in Erie, PA, where Greg is a buyer and contract administrator with GE Transportation. I am currently looking for an opportunity in or near Erie. I was previously working at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH.

Class of 2011

Michael Osborne: I am working at UNC Chapel Hill in the Prenatal Diagnostics Program and published "Discordant noninvasive prenatal testing results in a patient subsequently diagnosed with metastatic disease" in Prenatal Diagnosis June 2013. This is a platform presentation at ACMG in 2013. I live downtown Raleigh with my two puppies, Taco and Helix.

Class of 2012

Sara Wienke: I am loving my life in Charleston, SC. For the past year, I have continued to provide telephone counseling to patients with alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency as well as travel to various Alpha-1 Education days speaking about the condition. I have managed to get published in both the Journal of Genetic Counseling through my work with a researcher at Penn state as well as a commentary about expanded carrier screening panels in the Journal of Community Genetics, which I worked on with Meagan Farmer- be sure to check it out! I recently bought a home in Charleston and in addition to my own 4 legged children, Oliver and Lola (that are great as ever), I now have 2 step dogs, Zero and Quiet Man that are Jack Russell terriers. I am sorry that I did not make it to the NSGC AEC in Anaheim this year but will be in Nashville for ACMG in March.

Class of 2012

Ryan Noss: I am working as a clinical genetic counselor at the Cleveland Clinic's Genomic Medicine Institute. I see patients in our Pediatric and Adult Genetics Clinic and I am beginning to see more and more patients in our Cancer Genetics Clinic as well. I also staff our multidisciplinary Spina Bifida Clinic. Additionally, I am the Prospective Students Task Force Leader for the NSGC's Students/New Member SIG. Our task force's primary goal currently is updating the prospective student focused content on the NSGC website. Also, I will be presenting during one of the Educational Breakout Sessions during NSGC's Annual Education Conference. Lastly, I recently passed Boards so I am now a certified genetic counselor, and Ohio recently passed Licensure for Genetic Counselor so I am also recently a licensed genetic counselor.

Meagan (Wiesenhart) Farmer: I'm still working at UAB and recently became the director of cancer genetic counseling services. Before Katie Farmer's (fellow UNCG alum) departure, we were working together to expand the telemedicine program and to begin universal colorectal tumor testing at UAB. I hope to see both efforts take off in the next year. I also help facilitate a local BRCA support group. It's been a busy year with the UAB genetic counseling training program as well. I serve as a primary supervisor for cancer clinical rotations and am teaching a course this semester and next. I was also glad to get to work with Sara Wienke (UNCG classmate) on an article on expanded carrier screening that was recently published in the Journal of Community Genetics.



Class of 2012

Julie Jesiolowski: I am working as a clinical liaison genetic counseling at Sequenom's newly established RTP Laboratory in Morrisville, NC. At Sequenom, I provide education for health care professionals on all aspects of company's molecular diagnostic technology. I also give presentations and offer support for a variety of audiences in the scientific community. I am currently working on multiple case studies involving our non-invasive prenatal testing technology, in addition to establishing an internship program for genetic counseling students. I am a member of NSGC, NCMGA, and Women in Bio's RTP Chapter. This fall, I am leading a concurrent session at the National MPS Society's annual family meeting on "Reproductive Technologies."

Class of 2012

Courtney Kiss: I have been working full time in my dream job as a prenatal, pediatric and adult genetic counselor in the Medical Genetics Unit at Kingston General Hospital in Kingston, Ontario. This year I was part of the Canadian Association of Genetic Counselors Annual Newsletter Subcommittee. I gave a presentation about genetic counseling as a career option to high school students as part of a pathology and molecular medicine enrichment course at Queen's University earlier this year, and will be giving a presentation on genetic counseling and hereditary breast and ovarian cancer at the Ontario Association of Medical Radiation Sciences Eastern Section Education Day in late October. I am happy to report that I am officially an ABGC board certified genetic counselor, and am preparing to write the CAGC board exam in November of this year. On a personal note, I took my first trip to the mountains in Alberta this summer, and my boyfriend and I bought our first house in Kingston. I am thrilled to be living and working so close to home!

Class of 2013

Rebecca Fowler: I recently accepted a laboratory genetic counselor position with GeneDx! I will be relocating to the Gaithersburg, MD area with my husband and our two cats before starting the position in November. I will be working as part of the "core" team, which specializes in tests for rare genetic disorders. I hope to hear from you soon with all of your genetic testing questions!



Class of 2013

Class of 2013

Rebecca Okashah: I am currently working at the Children's Hospital of San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas as a pediatric genetic counselor. The Children's Hospital of San Antonio is the city's first freestanding children's hospital not connected to an adult facility and is now in collaboration with Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital in Houston. This is an exciting opportunity for me as I am the first genetic counselor at ChofSA and hope to help the department grow. I presented my graduate research "Knowledge, understanding, coping strategies of siblings of children with 22q11.2DS" as a concurrent paper at the NSGC AEC 2013 in Anaheim, CA. I am also a member of the Texas Society of Genetic Counselors and NSGC Pediatric SIG.

Amy (Kendall) Kenney: I graduated last year and am currently working as a prenatal counselor at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, VA. I also recently got married in September! I am working on starting to get involved with the Down Syndrome group of the Hampton Roads area through the National Down Syndrome Foundation and will be helping out at their annual Buddy Walk this Saturday, October 19.

Ledare Finley: I recently started work at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Dept. of Medical Genetics in Little Rock, Arkansas. I hold a joint position with the Dept. of Gynecological Oncology, working with department director Dr. Kristin Zorn. I will be seeing Dr. Zorn's patients as well as following up with former patients in the department who would be appropriate clients for genetic counseling. UAMS will soon begin universal tumor testing for colon and endometrial cancers and I will be following up with the endometrial cancer patients. My position also has a 50% research role and we will be setting up a tumor registry and building patient databases for future research. In my free time, I am studying for the board exam and getting to know my way around Little Rock.

Faculty and Staff Updates

Sally Sprague



Fred and I took our first cruise to Alaska in May with a 3 day side trip to Denali National Park. Highlights from the trip included whale watching, seeing the glaciers and close encounters with a moose, bear, Dahl sheep, eagles and other wild-life! Please remember to send me an email to let me know how you are doing and with any updated contact information (saspragu@uncg.edu). Thanks also to the Class of 2013 for gifting our program with a donation to the Student Enrichment Fund at their graduation!

Dennis LaJeunesse

As I have heard from Nancy, it sounds like all of the GC graduates are doing great and I hope the best for everyone. My family has grown up during my thirteen years at UNCG. I find this sad and exciting, as I haven't changed much at all - well a little...lost more hair and my doctor has told me that I am an inch shorter. Sabastien is bigger and more interesting than ever. He has started his junior year of high school; he is still a history buff and has become a great cook. On the upside, he volunteers to make at least one dinner a week. Haley has become an outstanding young woman. She has started high school this year and is adjusting to her new schedule – lots of football games and more homework. She likes to draw, paint, and bake. Amy has been breeding daylilies and has a large collection growing in our front yard – which is good, because the remainder of the yard is a disaster (that's my part). Amy and I have been busy for the past few years with research and our joint cross-over Drosophila/virus project is has produced several nice publications. Starting in January, I will be joining faculty in the Department of Nanoscience at the new Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering, which will be fun and exciting. It is strange to think that I have been at UNCG for thirteen years and have taught thirteen classes and over 100 genetic counseling students and I plan on continuing this in the future as much as I can. I hope everyone has a great holidays.



Randi Culp Stewart



The past year has been such an enjoyable one! I continue to enjoy all aspects of my job as Assistant Director of our program as well as the families that Dr. Reitnauer and I see in our pediatric genetics clinic at Cone. I am grateful that I can still spend time in clinic with patients, supervise genetic counseling students and interact with other medical learners. My daughter Ryleigh is now 4-years-old. Will and I have been able to get away for several camping adventures this year and it has been fun to see her develop an interest and appreciation for the outdoors despite the occasional “monster” encounter (ie all four-legged creatures living in the woods). It was great to see so many of you in Anaheim and Phoenix this year at the NSGC and ACMG meetings! I hope you all are happy and healthy and enjoy the holiday season!

UNCG Genetic Counseling Student Enrichment Fund: **MATCH** Campaign!

As graduates from the UNCG Genetic Counseling Program, we have all benefitted from financial support to aid us in travel to the national NSGC and/or local NCMGA meetings, providing incentives for our Capstone projects and/or resources for joint class meetings. This support provided to each student is possible thanks to donations by alumni and other program supporters. We continue to appreciate every donation to the Student Enrichment Fund, large and small, as it is all used to further the students' professional development.

This year, Nancy has generously offered to **MATCH** every donation made to the Enrichment Fund between now and December 31, 2013! Many thanks for her commitment to the experience of our current students. Please take a few minutes to use this **MATCH** Campaign as an opportunity for program alumni to express our thanks for the training and care that we received in the program or for other "friends of the program" to contribute to the training of genetic counselors in order to enable students to provide the best patient care both before and after graduation! Remember that donations are **tax deductible**. A donation now would result in double the impact thanks to the **MATCH** Campaign!

You may make a tax deductible contribution to the Student Enrichment Fund online [[Click here](#)] or by mailing a check payable to the "MS Genetic Counseling Program Student Enrichment Fund." Checks should be mailed directly to:

Sally Sprague
UNCG Genetic Counseling Program
119 McIver Street
Greensboro, NC 20412

Personal Updates



Amanda Noyes' son, Wyatt, born this past March.



Becky Okashah and Amy Kendall at Amy's wedding. Congratulations, Amy!



Sara Weinke's full house!



Claire Healy's daughter, Lillian.



Shannon Morrill-Cornelius's beautiful family with sons Sawyer and Cooper.



Jennifer Dickerson's son, Daniel, born last December.



Dr. Pam Reitnauer's daughter, Sofia.



Randi Stewart's 4 year-old daughter, Ryleigh.

Christy Odom's little girl, Charlotte (below).



The Class of 2013 celebrates at the annual program holiday party!





Angela Schwab's two pitbulls, Shorty and Julie.

Michael Osborne and puppies, Taco and Helix.



Whitney Cogswell's new daughter, Rory Allison!



Becky Crimian and husband, Scott's, wedding this past Labor Day. Congratulations, Becky!

Tomi Toler's newly adopted dog, Ringo.



Melissa Alderdice with her son, Zavier.



Class of 2013 on Graduation Day!



First year students (Class of 2015) at the Buddy Walk.



Dana (Faux) Stolar, Mallory Schultz Sdano, Melanie Hardy, Michael Osborne and Emily Walsh at Dana Faux's wedding. Congratulations Dana!

Thank you to first year student Samantha Caldwell (Class of 2015) for her help in creating this newsletter!