



News from the U

April 2007

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Special points of interest:

- Pre-Commencement for the class of 2007 will be held May 17, 2007 at 1:00 pm
- Six students will be graduating the program in 2007
- The MGC program has completed interviewing for the incoming class of 2009.
- Universal acceptance for the class of 2009 begins on Friday May 4th and closes Wednesday May 9th

Welcome!

It has been quite a while since the last publication of the News from the U and the Genetic Counseling Training program at the University of Maryland School of Medicine has undergone many changes! In 2005 we welcomed Shannan DeLany Dixon, MS, CGC as Program Director and Jessica Rispoli Joines, MGC, CGC as Assistant Director. Carol Greene, MD continues in her role as Medical Director of the program. We have welcomed many new faces and sincerely appreciate the

generosity of everyone who has contributed to the development of the program and its students. Thanks to our current program staff and faculty: Jessica Rispoli Joines, MGC, CGC Assistant Director; Carol Greene, MD Medical Director; Pamela Shinnick, Program Administrator;

Miriam Blitzer, PhD; Erin Strovel, PhD; Amanda Higgs, MGC, CGC; June Dennen, MSW, CGC; Toni Pollin, MS, CGC; Stephanie Ashley, MGC, CGC; Meredith Weaver, ScM; and Erynn Gordon, MS, CGC.



Clinical rotation site

It is always noted at interview time that many students name the range and focus of clinical rotations as one of the top reasons for selecting the UMD Genetic Counseling Program. In addition to the breadth of clinical opportunities previously available to students at the University of Maryland, we would like to thank and welcome our

new sites and supervisors! Welcome to Meg Menzel at Anne Arundel Medical Center, Nisha Issac at Saint Agnes Hospital, Lisa Freeze and the dedicated counselors and staff at George Washington Medical Center. Our program and students will benefit greatly from your expertise and dedication.

The Baltimore/Washington area Genetic Counseling programs including Howard University, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Maryland will be meeting shortly to review and assign clinical rotation sites for the Class of 2008. We will be contacting you shortly to discuss placements for Summer 2007, Fall 2007 and Spring 2008.

Class of 2007

Though hard at work in rotations, and still finding time to take a class together and enjoy the weather and sights in Baltimore, the UMD class of 2007 has also begun work towards their theses. Becky completed a project with the team at the University on her project titled "Prevalence of Six Comorbid Conditions Among Families with Interstitial Cystitis: A case controlled study." Laura, along with a research group at UMD studied: "The Comparison of Family Histories when Obtained by a Genetic Counselor Versus a Primary Care Physician." Georgette and Elizabeth

are both worked with the Cornelia de Lange Syndrome communities on their projects and attended the National CdLS conference in Philadelphia. Georgette's project with Dr. Antonie Kline at GBMC hospital is titled "An Assessment of Sleep in Cornelia de Lange syndrome" and Elizabeth, is working with Dr. Marco Grados from Johns Hopkins on "Prediction of Parenting Stress Levels using Maladaptive Characteristics observed in the Cornelia de Lange syndrome Behavioral Phenotype." Emily's project, initiated through the National Coalition for Health Pro-

fessionals Education in Genetics (NCHPEG) developed "Core Competencies in Family History for Healthcare Professionals" and Aimee will be working on a project with the UMD Cytogenetics Lab titled: "Current Resources, Methods, and Strategies for the Identification of Clinically Important Cytogenetic Abnormalities: A survey and independent analysis." We look forward to the contributions that the MGC class of 2007 will make in the genetic counseling field.



Class of 2008

The UMD class of 2008 is made up of five talented and eager future genetic counselors. Carolyn Dinsmore is a 2006 graduate of Johns Hopkins with a BS in Biological Sciences. She has been volunteering her time with a Baltimore/Washington area Down syndrome parent's support group. Rosemarie Keefe graduated in 2006 with a BS in Biochemistry and a BS in Psychology from Boston College. She has been working with the Harford County Au-

tism support group. Jodie Martin is a 2005 graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with a BS in Biology and a BS in Psychology and a minor Chemistry. Jodie worked with the Genetic Alliance before coming to the Genetic Counseling program and currently is volunteering her time working with the Huntington's Disease support group of Virginia. Andrea Short graduated with a BS in Biology from the University of Delaware in 2005 and spent a year

teaching English to children in Mexico before her arrival at UMD. Andrea is currently working with the SibShops support group for siblings of children with genetic diseases. Karen Siklosi graduated from Dennison University in 2006 with a BS in Biology. She is currently working with the Chesapeake Down syndrome Parent Group.



Additions to the UMD

In addition to the rigorous coursework that has been a part of the UMD curriculum in years past, two new courses have recently been added. To comply with the ABGC accreditation guidelines, previous UMD classes have taken "research methods" courses through other campus departments such as social work and nursing. The class of 2009 will be the first to

learn research methods and applications through a specially designed course, "Research for Genetic Counselors." This course has been tailored to development of the master's thesis requirement and focuses on research and statistical methods to be utilized in this important program component. Our second new course "Genetic Counseling Workshop" will

build on skills and theories presented in other clinically and medically based courses. However, in this setting, students will critically analyze cases and theories, develop creative methods for Teaching and educating patients, and review current popular media representations of the genetic counseling field and genetics.

During the summer, students are also now required to volunteer their time with a summer camp of their choosing. Students from the class of 2007 have had the opportunity to attend and participate in camps for children with NF, and other disabilities at Camp JCC. The Class of 2008 will be volunteering at camps in Maryland, Georgia and Maine.

University of Maryland

660 West Redwood Street
Suite 570
Baltimore, MD 21201



Bicentennial Facts

- *The University of Maryland School of Medicine is the oldest public medical school in the nation.*
- *The school's first dean, John Beale Davidge, with James Cocke and James Shaw began lecturing to students in their homes before constructing the first university building, Davidge Hall on Saratoga Street.*
- *In the school's first years, students paid a \$5 matriculation fee and \$20 to each professor. Admission tickets were required to attend each lecture.*

UMD celebrates its bicentennial anniversary

In 2007, the University of Maryland School of Medicine celebrates its bicentennial anniversary. Established in 1807, the University began as the dream of three dedicated individuals: John Beale Davidge, James Cocke, and James Shaw. Davidge and Cocke were trained physicians educated in Europe and Shaw, a chemist. Appalled by the state of health care in Baltimore, a thriving harbor town plagued by malaria, cholera, and typhoid, these men dedicated their lives to improving the state of medi-

cine in the city. In 1807, Davidge constructed the first lecture hall and anatomical theatre behind his house on Saratoga Street. Unfortunately, dissection was not popular among the general public and riots outside the building were commonplace. One such event led by a mob protesting the use of cadavers demolished the first University building constructed by Davidge. However, the spirit of the scholars survived. The first class of five students graduated in 1810. And since then, more than 70,000 physicians have

claimed the UMD School of Medicine as alma mater. This year, the celebration will include banquets, lectures by popular leaders such as Patti LaBelle, Janet Reno, and Cal Ripken, Jr., a Gala, and graduation parade leading up to the commencement ceremony at First Mariner Arena on May 18, 2007. The Genetic Counseling Program will also honor our graduates with the annual Pre-Commencement Ceremony on May 17th at 1:00pm. We invite everyone to join us as we honor the class of 2007.

Bicentennial
1807-2007
UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
SCHOOL of MEDICINE

Masters in Genetic Counseling Program

660 West Redwood Street

Suite 570

Baltimore, MD 21201

