



News from the U

March 2008

Welcome!

As we sit to write the newsletter, Jessica and I are amazed with how quickly the last four months have flown by. Graduation will be here before we know it!

Each of the 2nd year students is actively completing her thesis and course work. Additionally, all of the 2nd year students have started

the job hunting process; many traveling across the US for interviews.

The first year students have established their routines and are getting ready for summer rotations and volunteer camp experiences. This year, the students are volunteering at two different camps for people with genetic conditions: MDA

and NF. We look forward to introducing you to them in rotations.

As always, we would like to thank all of our supervisors and alumni as the program could not exist nor succeed without your hard work and dedication.

Shannan and Jessica

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From Bottom to Top.

First Row: Andrea Short and Jackie Francis.

Second row: Cathy Griswold, Carolyn Dinsmore, Stephanie Miller and Jodie Martin.

Third Row: Lauren Doyle, Rose Keefe, Karen Siklosi and Natalie Beck

Important Date

March 21, 2008: First day of interviews for the MGC Program

April 15, 2008: Autism Workshop at Towson University

May 2, 2008: Universal notification date for all Genetic Counseling Programs

May 15, 2008: MGC Precommencement Ceremony

May 16, 2008: UMB Graduation

June 1, 2008: Summer rotations begin

ABGC Accreditation

We are thrilled to announce that the University of Maryland Master's in Genetic Counseling Training Program was awarded Full Reaccreditation for the maximum period of time (8 years) by the American Board of Genetic Counselors.

The MGC site visit occurred on February 19th and 20th. The site visitors commented on the strength of our students, alumni and supervisors! On behalf of the program, we would like to say thank you for your assistance during the year of self study and our site visit.

We plan to continue the forward momentum created by our self study. Specifically, we hope to check in with our alumni and their employers within one year of graduation to determine if there are additional topics we may address in the program. We will continue to provide feedback to our lecturers and supervisors on a yearly or bi-annual basis. Please let us know if you have additional suggestions!

Exploring the Human Body

On February 28, the MGC program 1st and 2nd year students had the unique opportunity to attend Gunther von Hagens' Body Worlds exhibit at the Maryland Science Center in Baltimore. This exhibit allowed the students to see first hand the various human organ systems and brain anomalies we study in HGEN 780 (Advanced Clinical Genetics). The exhibit consists of real human bodies showing the details of disease and anatomy that cannot be shown with models through a process called Plastination.



Congratulations to Jodie Martin (Class of 2008) for finishing the Walt Disney World Marathon! Jodie was a member of the Children's Tumor Foundation Team.

Graduation 2008

The MGC Pre-commencement Ceremony and Student Colloquium will be held on Thursday May 15, 2008 at 1pm in the HSF II auditorium. All are invited to attend. Our keynote speaker will be Joann Boughman, PhD, Executive Vice President for the American Society of Human Genetics.

Outreach Program



From left to right: Natalie Beck, Cathy Griswold and Lauren Doyle.

On February 29 the MGC program participated in DNA Day at Franklin Middle School in Baltimore County. Three 1st year students from the training program (Natalie Beck, Lauren Doyle and Cathy Griswold) taught the 7th grade students in Ms. Leather's class how to extract DNA from strawberries, bananas and corn. This is the second year that MGC students have worked with Franklin Middle School students to teach them about genetics. Approximately 150 students take part each year.

This is a wonderful community outreach program that we plan to continue in years to come.

Student and Supervisor Workshops

On January 17 and 18, 2008, the University of Maryland Master's in Genetic Counseling training program sponsored a student and a supervisors' workshop led by Bonnie LeRoy, MS, the director of the Minnesota GC Program and her colleague, Pat McCarthy Veach, PhD. We were fortunate to sponsor a student workshop on January 17, 2008. All of the MGC students (both first and second years) met with Bonnie and Pat to review supervision and exchange ideas of supervision interactions and experiences. On Friday January 18, 2008 thirty-three supervisors, both experienced and novice, from nearly every clinical genetics setting in the Baltimore/Washington area, attended this day-long workshop. The evaluations of the workshop were very positive. The majority of participants shared that the various aspects of the workshop were very useful, and all felt that it was very likely they would integrate at least some of what was learned at the workshop into their work as a clinical supervisor. Many noted that it was great to learn that others struggled with the same issues in clinical supervision and that there is a network of local supervisors from whom to seek support and guidance. One noted that the material has gotten her thinking as to how to improve as a supervisor, and she is now "re-excited" about supervising. Thanks to all for attending and supporting the MGC program.

In anticipation of National Family History Day observed on Thanksgiving Day each year 2nd year MGC student Rose Keefe put together a project on family medical history for the Maryland Science Center. On Saturday, November 17, Keefe and 2nd years Carolyn Dinsmore and Karen Sikloski, along with MGC director, Shannan Dixon, made themselves available for Maryland Science Center visitors to help them put together medical family histories.

Alumni Corner

April (Deigert) Tucker '04 is expecting her 2nd child in August 2008. Congratulations April!

Ania White '06 and her husband Rob recently returned to the Baltimore/Washington DC area. Ania is now the full time prenatal Genetic Counselor at Anne Arundel Medical Center. We are thrilled to have Ania as a new MGC supervisor. Welcome Back Ania!

Nikki Justice Ledbetter '99 is expecting her first child May 2008. Congratulations Nikki!

Jessica Rispoli Joines '00 had two abstract accepted for presentation at the American College of Medical Genetics Meetings in Phoenix, AZ (one platform and one poster) and a poster presentation at the Society for Inborn Errors of Metabolism. Jodie Martin (a 2nd year MGC student was a co-author) along with Carol Greene, MD, our medical director.

Brad Williams '06 has a platform presentation at the International Society for Prenatal Diagnosis discussing "PTPN11 Analysis for the Prenatal Diagnosis of Noonan Syndrome in

Fetuses with Abnormal Ultrasound Findings." He is also the author of The User's Guide to Genome Wide Microarray Analysis Flipbook.

Colleen (Landy) Schmidt '05 presented a poster titled "Longest Known Survival in Prenatally Diagnosed Duplication of the Complete Long Arm of Chromosome 1."



Above: Nikki Justice Ledbetter ('99) and Jessica Joines ('00) at the ACMG meetings in Phoenix, Arizona.

2007 ABGC Examination 2007

Congratulations to all who passed the American Board of Genetic Counseling Certification Exams! We are so proud of all of you.

For those of you who plan to take the boards in 2009, the online application

process is available at www.abgc.net.

Please remember to alert the MGC program if you plan to take the examination.



MGC Class of 2010

We received 84 applications this year for the MGC program. Interviews will begin on Friday, March 21, 2008. Universal notification day is Friday, May 2, 2008 and final acceptance must be decided by Wednesday, May 7, 2008.

We were fortunate to have a few MGC graduates attend the ACMG meetings this year. We met for a mini-reunion. Pictured from left to right: Jessica Joines ('00), Karen Benson ('03) and Colleen Schmidt ('05)

News From the UI is available on-line in the student section!
Check out the MGC website at
<http://medschool.umaryland.edu/mgc/>

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Class of 2008 Independent Study Projects



Carolyn Dinsmore: *The Uptake of Invasive Prenatal Testing in the Infertility Population Compared to the Naturally-Conceiving Population*



Rosemarie Keefe: *The Mother Daughter Cancer Connection: Risk, Worry and Impact of Event Study.*



Jodie Martin: *Determination of Risk Assessment Protocols for Midtrimester Amniocentesis in Prenatal Care Centers.*



Andrea Short: *Assessment of Physicians' Screening Practices and Knowledge of Genetic Disorders in the Ashkenazi Jewish Community*



Karen Siklosi: *Attitudes of Genetic Counselors Toward a Pictorial Representation of Disability.*