

COLLEGE STUDENT PERSONNEL NEWSLETTER

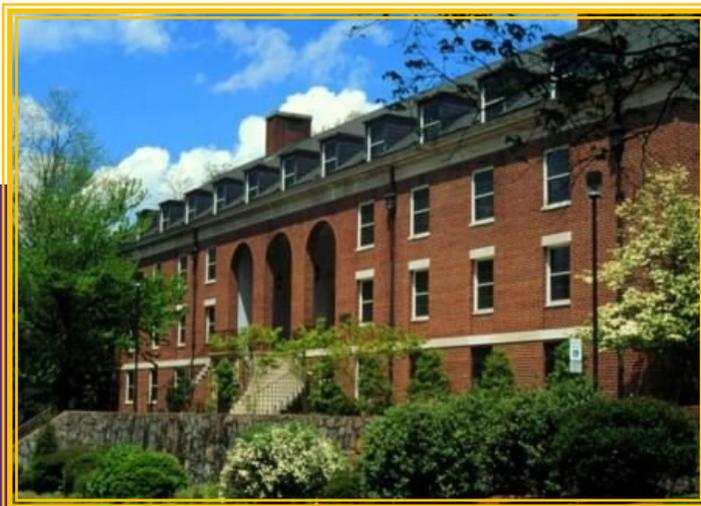
CSP Newsletter • Human Services • Western Carolina University

Spring 2015 • No 1, Vol 2



In This Issue

- New Hampshire native finds adventure at WCU
- Why choose the CSP program at Western?
- Myranda receives competitive internship
- NASPA Adventures in NOLA
- A few words from graduating senior Clarence Williams
- What CSP Alumni have to say



Madison Hall in Spring on Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC campus. Photo courtesy: WCU Facebook.com

Hilton sums up his first year at WCU

As the academic year winds down, I would like to take a moment to update you on a few of the highlights during my first year as Director of WCU's College Student Personnel (CSP) graduate degree program. First, I am pleased to announce 11 students have completed their degree studies and will be graduating this May. Additionally, some of these graduates have already secured employment prior to commencement.

The articles in this newsletter will also feature some significant accomplishments made this year by both our graduating students and current students in the program. One article details how graduating student Kelsey Kunkle secured her first Student Affairs position post graduation and her experience participating in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Placement Exchange program. Another article follows graduating student Cherry Poole's journey to acceptance at NCCU School of Law.

Four of our program's first-year students entered a national competition, presented by studentaffairs.com, on bullying within higher education, bringing home a third-place win. Another first-year student was elected president of WCU's Graduate Student Association (GSA), as well as more articles on other first-year students' triumphs.

On a personal note, both Dr. April Perry, assistant professor of College Student Personnel, and I attended the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) annual meeting in New Orleans, LA, March 22-25, 2015. We focused on the faculty-track sessions at the conference for our professional development.

The CSP graduate degree program faculty, staff, and I are excited about the 2015-16 academic year as we eagerly prepare to welcome a new cohort of students this fall.

Wishing each of you an enjoyable summer break. Go Cats!



Adriel A. Hilton

Adriel A. Hilton, Assistant Professor & Director, College Student Personnel (CSP) Graduate Degree Program

New Hampshire native finds adventure at WCU



Cassie Spencer

My name is Cassie Spencer, and I am a first-year student in the CSP graduate degree program here at WCU. I earned my B.A. in Communications from the University of New Hampshire (UNH) in 2014.

As a native of New Hampshire, I was looking for a new adventure...and most definitely a place with warmer weather! It is not easy to leave behind everything I know and love, but it is exciting to begin a new journey. I instantly fell in love with WCU and felt right home in the CSP program.

Pursuing a career in higher education was not my original chosen career

path. I spent a good portion of my undergraduate career exploring other fields, including marketing, event planning, and counseling. I also did a bit of traveling, spending a semester living in London and touring throughout Europe. It was not until my senior year at UNH that I realized I not only loved the college environment, but also loved everything that Career Services offers to students. I sat in my career counselor's office at UNH and a light bulb went off—I *knew this was the field I wanted to work in.*

I currently serve as the graduate assistant in the WCU Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education. I love working with students on their job searching documents. It can be a tedious process, but watching a student walk out with a perfected resume and cover letter is really rewarding. In addition to helping students with resumes and cover letters, I also supervise the Peer Career Mentors, contribute to the Career Services' Career Journal, and help to coordinate all career events and presentations.

This academic year, I have also spent the spring semester interning with the University of North Carolina at Asheville in their Service Learning Office. Through this internship, I coordinated three Alternative Service Experience spring break trips for 30 students and three faculty participants. Additionally, I have accepted a NODA summer internship with Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, PA, where I will work as the Summer Conference Coordinator.

Looking ahead to next year, I will continue my graduate assistantship with Career Services at WCU. I plan to participate in at least one internship where I hope to explore a new area of higher education. The experiences I've had in my graduate assistantship and in my internship have proven to be invaluable. I feel confident they will prepare me for my future career in higher education.

Enrolling in the CSP program at WCU is one of the best choices I've made. I am very grateful to be part of such a supportive, challenging, and rewarding program. Coming from a school of 15,000 undergraduates, I love being in a small cohort and small program. Both Dr. Hilton and Dr. Perry have provided me with an immense amount of knowledge to prepare me for my future career, and I'm really excited to see what next year (and beyond) will bring!

CSP students win national competition



From left to right: Andrew Johnson, Ronni Williams, Cassie Spencer, and Joshua Cauble.

WCU College Student Personnel graduate degree students entered a national competition, presented by studentaffairs.com, on bullying within higher education. This year marked the 14th annual contest, which included students representing twenty universities across the United States. WCU placed third in the competition, resulting in the first time a team from WCU has placed.

This year's case study required students to create a three-minute video that provided statistical representation of bullying on campuses in the U.S. and the effects bullying has on these individuals.

All four team members are in their first year in WCU's CSP program. Both Joshua Cauble and Ronni Williams work in the Office of Leadership and Student Involvement, housed in the University Center on campus. Joshua works as the Graduate Program Coordinator for the Office of Leadership and Student Involvement, with Ronni as Graduate Program Coordinator of Clubs and Organizations. Both Joshua and Ronni aspire to work with leadership programming after the completion of their degree in 2016. Cassie works in Career Services as the Graduate Assistant of Career Services and Cooperative Education. Cassie hopes to also work in career services once she has graduated. Andrew works in Admissions at the University of North Carolina-Asheville. These students would like to thank their professors, Drs. April Perry and Adriel Hilton, for their support and guidance during this process, as well as all others who have helped them through the program.

Why choose the CSP program at Western?

The process of applying and selecting doctorate programs was an unexpected challenge. Examining and selecting the best academy for me to attend was enriching due to each school having very knowledgeable and seasoned faculty. My experience in the College Student Personnel program at Western Carolina University has prepared me for this next venture in my life, based upon the rigorous course work and rich class discussions my instructors and classmates provided. As I leave Western Carolina University, the bonds I developed in and outside the classroom will forever be with me. Attending Western Carolina University's College Student Personnel program has been one of the best decisions I have ever made.

- Kevin McClain



Kevin McClain

Interviewing at TPE with Kelsey Kunkle

My name is Kelsey Kunkle, and I will be proudly graduating from the College Student Personnel program in May 2015. For the 2014-15 academic year, I have served as the Graduate Assistant in the Advising Center. During the previous academic year, I served as a Graduate Success Coordinator in the Department of Residential Living and have held three internships in varying departments, including a NODA internship at the University of North Texas during the summer of 2014. I have recently completed my job search, which mostly consisted of going through The Placement Exchange (TPE), hosted by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and included a small independent search.



Kelsey Kunkle

On March 17, 2015, I traveled down to New Orleans, LA, with many members of my cohort to interview for positions at institutions across the country. My TPE experience, however, started months before our trip to New Orleans with the application and phone interview phase. Some institutions conducted first-round phone or Skype interviews to narrow down their candidate pool before TPE. During the month of February, I had three phone interviews and one Skype interview with institutions planning to conduct only second-round interviews onsite at TPE. In March, I left for TPE with 12 first-round and four second-round prescheduled interviews.

The day before interviews started, another cohort member and I attended TPE boot camp, which allowed us to become familiar with the facility, perform mock interviews, and ask questions of professionals who have experienced both sides of the TPE interview table. Candidate and employer mailboxes were used to communicate onsite, so the process of moving around the Convention Center generally consisted of being in the candidate work or waiting rooms and going to check mailboxes. Fortunately, my first and second days of interviews resulted in more second-round interview invitations in my mailbox, which I was able to easily arrange at the scheduling desk. The night following the third day of interviews, Saturday, was the night that many institutions hosted socials. I attended five socials that evening, where I was able to connect with staff members from the institutions, alumni, and candidates in a more relaxed setting.

The entire TPE process was an amazing experience because it allowed me to meet and connect with so many graduate students and professionals from institutions across the country, as well as experience the true "small world" feel of Student Affairs. The environment was extremely supportive, which really took the pressure off of interviewing. Both the employers and other candidates made the interviewing experience fun and less stressful. The supportive environment continued into the NASPA Conference, where I participated in a graduate case study competition and gained a mentor. I also felt extremely prepared to attend both TPE and the national conference from the conversations and in-class preparation with Drs. Hilton and Perry. In the capstone course, Dr. Perry helped us reflect on our experiences and to tell our stories to employers with confidence, which made interviewing feel more like a natural conversation rather than a stereotypically stressful interview.

Since returning from TPE, I scheduled multiple on-campus interviews but only attended two before receiving and accepting an offer for my top-choice position. While my job search experience was much more exciting and fun than I had anticipated, I am glad it has come to an end in order to start my next adventure in May. I am very excited to be the Coordinator for the Transfer Center at the University of North Texas, and I am so thankful that I was able to connect with so many amazing professionals in the field along the way.



Myranda Floyd

“I was fortunate enough to find confidence and receive great support from both Dr. Hilton and Dr. Perry.”

Myranda receives competitive internship

My name is Myranda Floyd, and I am a first-year student in the CSP graduate degree program here at WCU. I was born and raised in Burlington, NC, and graduated from WCU in the spring of 2014 with a B.S. in Communication Sciences and Disorders. I started pursuing my Master’s degree the following semester and am serving as the Graduate Community Coordinator in Scott Hall for the Department of Residential Living. I am also currently interning in the Department of Student Community Ethics with Bob Alston and Walter Turner.

Searching for a summer internship was an experience that challenged me wholeheartedly, and was an experience I will never forget. After numerous first- and second-round interviews, I am finally headed to Georgia Southern University to work as an Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I) intern! I will be working specifically with the Eagle Incentive Program (EIP) along with one other intern. This program is a five-week summer bridge program that is designed for students who are provisionally accepted for fall admission into the university.

I chose to look for a summer internship because my close friend Kelsey Kunkle, a second-year student in the program, did an internship in Texas the summer of 2014. I knew I wanted to experience the housing world at a different institution, so I decided to apply for internships within ACUHO-I. The process was grueling, and by the end of it, I interviewed with 17 schools. I received second-round interviews with 13 of the 17 schools and was fortunate enough to choose between the University of West Florida and Georgia Southern University. Georgia Southern appealed to me more because of the Eagle Incentive Program that they offer. As an undergraduate student I worked closely with the Academic Success Program, a summer bridge program for conditionally accepted students, here at WCU, and saw how it tremendously impacted the students that were enrolled. I am excited to see how their program is run and the impact it will have on their students. Georgia Southern also uses the Residential Curriculum model within their department. This model is used by answering the question, “What do we want students to learn as a result of living in our residential communities?” I am hoping to bring back insight and ideas to WCU’s Department of Residential Living since I will be continuing my assistantship within this department in the fall.

I was fortunate enough to find confidence and receive great support from both Dr. Hilton and Dr. Perry during this process. I was able to do mock interviews with them and received guidance when I had to make the difficult decision about where I wanted to go. Their mentorship has helped me succeed in one of the most competitive internship selections in Higher Education. This process has helped me grow professionally and personally and will enable me to further hone in on where I want to be when I graduate next spring. I cannot wait to be an Eagle for the summer!



Joshua Cauble

NASPA Adventures in NOLA

Two first-year students in the College Student Personnel graduate degree program at WCU recently attended the 97th annual National Association of Student Personnel Administration (NASPA) Annual Conference held in New Orleans, LA. The conference is convened in different cities across the United States each year. This most recent conference, held in March, was focused around the theme "Navigating with Courage." Student Affairs professionals from around the U.S. attended and participated in various presentations throughout the duration of the event. Joshua



Ronni Williams

Cauble, Graduate Program Coordinator for the Office of Leadership and Student Involvement, and Ronni Williams, Graduate Program Coordinator for Clubs and Organizations, were both in attendance. Joshua stated, "With so many professionals in various positions, stages in their careers, and geographical locations, all coming to one meeting place, NASPA is such a rich source of information for new professionals within the field. During my duration at the conference, I was able to interact with so many people and connect with individuals who shared the same passion as me." Ronni said, "This experience gave me the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally and allowed me the opportunity to expand upon my knowledge of the student affairs profession".

Cherry Poole Accepted at NCCU School of Law

I am Cherry Poole, a second-year student in the CSP program at WCU, graduating in May, 2015. Thanks to the support and the inspiration I received from Dr. Hilton and Dr. Perry, I will be attending North Carolina Central University School of Law this upcoming fall. Originally from Hong Kong, 16 years ago I came to Powdersville, SC, as an exchange student at Wren High School. After receiving my bachelor's degree from North Greenville University, I began my career with Aramark Dining Services at WCU. During my 10 years of service with Aramark, I demonstrated the ability to operate both retail and all-you-can-eat locations, to manage both hourly employees and salaried associates, to lead the Safety and Sanitation committee, and the Employees' Rewards and Recognitions committee. My commitment and work performance earned me a nomination for the Accelerated for Eight program, which was the path to becoming a Foodservice Director. Although I was grateful for the opportunity, I realized that a career in food services was not my ultimate goal. Instead, I decided to pursue a master's degree and opt for a future in higher education. I am forever grateful for the opportunity Dr. Daly has given me to further my education. Enrolling in the CSP program has helped me to find



Cherry Poole

my passion, explore new opportunities, build networks, and develop long-lasting friendships. Transitioning back to college as a full-time working mom after being away from the academic world for 10 years was very stressful. Thankfully, my professors and cohort have been very understanding, accommodating, and supportive throughout these two years of study. However, my desire to study law had not become clear until last semester when I was taking a law in higher education class with Dr. Hilton. I found it fascinating to learn about the different laws that were designed to protect both the student and the institution. Conducting legal case studies was intellectually stimulating. Once I had decided to pursue a law degree, I expressed my desire to both Dr. Hilton and Dr. Perry. Immediately, Dr. Perry connected me with the Department of Student Community Ethics to serve as a graduate assistant during my final semester in order to gain legal experience. Dr. Hilton assisted me with my law school application process. Though I found the whole process a little overwhelming, I am looking forward to the new challenges ahead of me in law school.

A few words from Clarence Williams...



Clarence Williams

I came to Western Carolina University in 2008 and graduated in 2012 with a degree in Criminal Justice. I was also a member of the track-and-field team that won a team championship in 2009, and I placed first in the triple jump in 2010 and 2012.

I decided to come back to Western to pursue my Master's degree in College Student Personnel, which I will be completing in May 2015. During my degree program, I continued to serve as a guest speaker at regional Rotary Club lunches, where I captured the audience's attention

“Western will forever be the place I call home, no matter where I am.”

with my speaking abilities, work experiences, and pursuit of a graduate degree while serving as an assistant track and field coach for multiple team championships.

While in the CSP program, I spent the last two years as the Program and Assessment Coordinator for the A.K. Hinds University Center. Within my assistantship, I have worked with many student groups in programing and aided in the programing of Family Weekend, Spirit Week, and Homecoming. I have enjoyed working with different organizations on campus. It has allowed me to become more diverse as a Student Affairs professional.

One of my past projects that I am proud of is the Sustainable Energy Initiative started here at WCU. I worked with Lauren Bishop, the Chief Sustainability Officer here at WCU, and Adam Cometti, an undergraduate student, to aid in the development of the committee structure, bylaws, and all forms used to submit a project proposal. It has been a rewarding experience knowing I have made a lasting impact on Western's campus that advances the school's mission.

I look to pursue a career in Student Affairs; more specifically, within collegiate athletics working with students as they take the next step in their lives and transition out of their sport. I am pursuing this field because, as a former student athlete, I can closely identify and recognize their needs.

Since coming to WCU back in 2008, this has been one of the most influential times of my life. Western has allowed me to grow as a person and as a future administrator. I have been able to create meaningful relationships with the faculty within my program as I have continued my scholarship into graduate school. Western has done so much for me, and I aim to represent this university throughout my community engagement, scholarship, and future endeavors. Western will forever be the place I call home, no matter where I am.

Forever a Catamount!

Adam Ray appointed next GSA President

My name is Christopher "Adam" Ray, and I am a first-year graduate student enrolled in the College Student Personnel program at WCU. Over the course of the academic year, I have had the opportunity to actively participate in a diverse array of scholarly opportunities. From working with faculty members on items for publication to composing a proposal for the next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at WCU. All of these involvements have helped enhance my graduate experience.

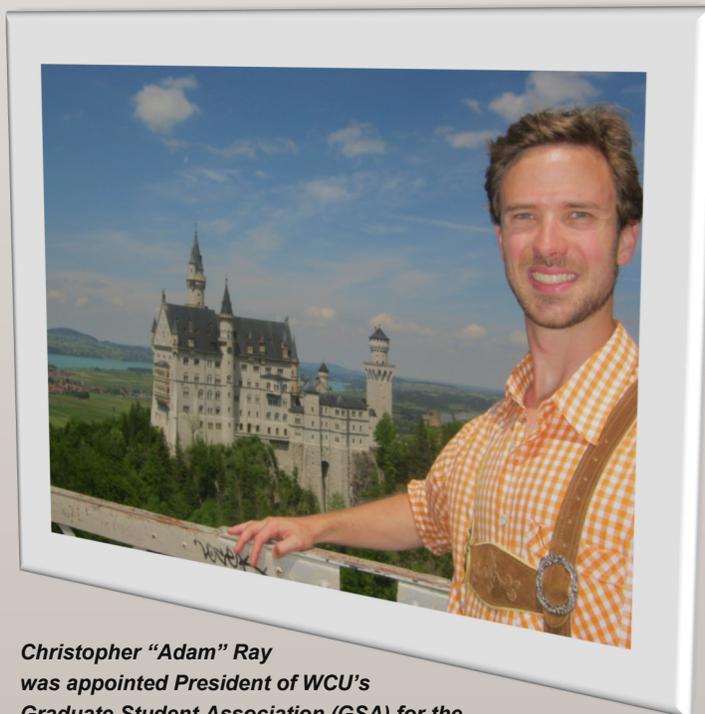
One specific opportunity that I have thoroughly enjoyed in my first year as a graduate student was that of the Graduate Student Association (GSA). In representing the premier organization for the graduate student population at WCU, the GSA provides all graduate students with resources and beneficial opportunities. Ranging from professional development through the Alumni Speaker Series to funding scholarly work through the use of travel grants, the GSA targets a diverse array of interests in order to promote the educational experience of all graduate students.

Over the course of the academic year, I served as the Vice President and was responsible for attending several committee meetings focused on the creation of additional educational opportunities for graduate students. In addition to this, I was also responsible for serving as a representative on the QEP committee, in which I developed a proposal for the University to consider related to regional community engagement. In serving as the Vice President, I learned a great deal about the importance of enhancing the opportunities extended to graduate students and the existence of the GSA.

Following fall semester, I challenged myself to become more actively involved in the future of the GSA. As a result of my passion, I was appointed to the position of President-Elect and plan on serving as the acting President of the GSA during the 2015-2016 academic year. I am ecstatic about the opportunity to serve in this capacity over the course of the next academic year and have the chance to make a considerable impact in the lives of graduate students.

Joining me next year as members of the executive staff will be Vice President Paul Farmer, Vice President Josh Anderson, Treasurer Thomas West, and Secretary Sabrina Teeter. As a team, we will focus on more efficient recruiting strategies, such as the You Plus One Initiative. This initiative requires current members of the GSA to bring another graduate student to general meetings in order to better convey and advertise the GSA to other interested individuals. Furthermore, we, as an organization, will be extending our influence within the graduate student population by hosting at least one general body meeting at the Biltmore Park site located in Asheville.

Another plan is the inclusion of additional professional development opportunities through the Alumni Speaker Series by hosting an additional session and including one at the Biltmore Park site. I am fully committed to each of these initiatives and will ensure that all of them are accomplished. I strongly believe that with the help of my executive staff, the GSA will be able to enhance its presence on the campus and assist in providing the graduate student population with a more beneficial experience.



**Christopher "Adam" Ray
was appointed President of WCU's
Graduate Student Association (GSA) for the
2015-16 academic year.**

WHAT WCU ALUMNI HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THEIR CSP GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

The classes were relevant and have been useful in my work.

Julie Conway, Instructor
Tennessee College of Applied Technology

I had an excellent experience at Western Carolina University! My professors were understanding and encouraging. I knew I could go to any of them for any questions or advice needed. I was challenged to think outside the box and look at things through different perspectives. I wouldn't change any of my experiences at WCU.

Carolyn Worley, Resident Director
Western Carolina University

Through the experiential learning experiences available within the CSP program, I was able to apply what I was learning in the classroom to my internships, assistantships, and other responsibilities on campus. The challenges that I faced outside of the classroom were points of discussion inside the classroom, as well.

Anastasia Richards, Transfer Coordinator
University of Idaho

The cohort model was essential to my choosing WCU in the first place and for my success in learning and completing the degree in two years. Also, I appreciated the in-person format. Of the most value was the assistantship (20 hours/week) at WCU. Not only for financial reasons and hands-on experience, but for the unique and supporting relationships. The coursework and the assistantships coordinated

with each other and were supported by all supervisors involved.

Sarah Burkhardt, Resident Director
University of Southern Maine

My assistantships and internships taught me the most about how to be a Student Affairs professional.

Melissa Boles, Academic Advisor
Clark College

It is a gorgeous campus with great professional staff and faculty.

Lincoln Walburn, Assistant Director
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi

It is a great experience, where the close-knit community will allow you to flourish as a person.

Joe Wheelless, Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life
The College of William & Mary

It changed my life. I really enjoyed my experience there and felt that I grew more than any other college experience I've had.

Stephanie Hesbacher, Hall Director
University of Tennessee

Please direct all comments and questions regarding this newsletter to:

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