

*Department of Counselor Education*

*The College of New Jersey*

**ANNUAL REPORT**

*Academic Year 2015-2016*

**A. OUR MISSION CONTINUES**

The Department of Counselor Education at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) offers students rigorous, high-quality graduate programs of study in school counseling, clinical mental health counseling (generalist practice or addiction specialization), and marriage, couple, and family counseling and therapy. As a unit within the School of Education, the department embraces the mission of Creating Agents of Change, the overarching goal of the Conceptual Framework of the Professional Education Unit at TCNJ.

The mission of every program in the department is to create exemplary counseling professionals prepared to enrich the lives of the people of New Jersey and around the globe through counseling and service and to provide a national model for the preparation of counselors. The department is committed to creating and supporting an inclusive learning community and to serving students from diverse backgrounds who seek initial and advanced degrees in counseling.

Guided by the *Standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)*, which emphasize the traditions, values, and objectives of professional counseling programs, the faculty of the Department of Counselor Education engages students in the developmental process of becoming professional counselors who will address the needs of the people they serve in an ethical and competent manner.

**B. DEPARTMENT IMPACT in 2015-2016:**

*Department Recognition*

This year the Counselor Education Department was selected as the recipient for the Mildred Dahne Award for departmental excellence. This award is given annually to a department at TCNJ that demonstrates excellence and outstanding achievement in the following areas: teaching, academics, department impact, innovation and creativity, student involvement, and service to the profession.

*Student Recognition*

The Department of Counselor Education is proud of the recognition that our students are receiving at the national, regional, and state levels. Following are a few highlights of these achievements:

- The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) selected two of our graduates for the National Board for Certified Counselors Minority Fellowship Program in 2015. Another student was just selected for this prestigious national fellowship in 2016.
- Two students were selected as Graduate Student Representatives for the Southern Chapter of the New Jersey Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (SNJAMFT) in 2015 and the New Jersey Association for Marriage and Family Therapy in 2016.
- One of our students was recognized as an Emerging Leader for The Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) and will present at the American Counseling Association's national conference next spring.

### *The Impact of the TCNJ Clinic*

In November 2005, the Department of Counselor Education established The TCNJ Clinic, a community based clinic, to provide low cost supervised family therapy, counseling, and training to residents of Mercer County and surrounding communities. The Clinic's mission is to offer family therapy and individual counseling that: 1) provides opportunities for both graduate and post-graduate students to further develop their counseling and therapy skills while addressing the needs of individual clients and families, and 2) meets the changing social and emotional needs of those in the larger community.

The Department of Counselor Education partnered with the TCNJ Clinic in the fall of 2014 to successfully draft a proposal to the State of New Jersey, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services to provide *Recovery Support and Environmental Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Substance Abuse on College Campuses in New Jersey*. This funded initiative: offers recovery support services to students who struggles with substance use problems while students at TCNJ. In 2015, this initiative with funding of \$245,000 a year, renewable annually for five years, was moved from the TCNJ Clinic to Student Affairs, which bodes well for the institutionalization of this project as a key feature of the campus community in addressing substance use problems at TCNJ.

In the spring of 2014, the TCNJ Clinic received a contract to become the Intoxicated Driver Resource Center (IDRC) for Mercer County. The role of the Intoxicated Driver Resource Center (IDRC) is to improve the driving behavior of individuals who have been identified as having some alcohol or drug involvement in connection with the operation of a motor vehicle or vessel. The IDRC provides services to Mercer County residents or other individuals assigned by the Intoxicated Driver Program. This year the TCNJ Clinic renewed the contract with Mercer County to remain the IDRC for the next two years.

In 2016, a new director was hired for the clinic and has been working with student interns to provide group and individual counseling services to students in the Career & Community Studies program at TCNJ. A student intern has also been involved in partnering with the Lawrence Boys & Girls Club. Continued plans to engage in community outreach and education are being developed.

### *Other Impactful Departmental Community Outreach Initiatives:*

The department's faculty have been involved in a number of community-based outreaches throughout the year. One core faculty member, along with two alumni of the department, are offering the Mental Health Facilitator Program, which is developed by NBCC-International, to interested organizations in the community. Another core faculty member offered seven Mental Health First Aid trainings to undergraduate students, local K-12 teachers, and community organizations. Yet another faculty member works in conjunction with a county based counseling agency that provides services for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. Faculty presented at the Trauma Expert Panel for the Office of the Attorney General to inform state directors of programs about trauma-informed care. Finally, another core faculty member was instrumental in hosting a professional development event titled, Pathway to Licensure in MFT held on campus this past May.

Although the Department teaches only graduate students, faculty have received three Engagement Mini-Grant Awards in the current academic year (2015-2016) that support undergraduates in collaboration with other department/units on campus: 1) TCNJ Civility Week (FALL 2015), which provided activities and events in order for students to learn about others' identities and beliefs to promote a culture of diversity and inclusion; 2) U MATTER TCNJ Cares Train-the-Trainer (SPRING 2016), which is a new program that prepares student gatekeepers for the anxiety-provoking situation of interacting with a suicidal student and allows gatekeepers to overcome the obstacles that often leave a student in crisis feeling misunderstood, judged, invalidated, and dismissed; and 3) Men's Leadership Initiative (SPRING 2016), which is designed to promote respectful discussions on campus about compassionate leadership among male students, faculty and staff, regardless of differences in terms of how men may see their roles as leaders in our culture at TCNJ.

One of TCNJ's strategic priorities emphasizes integrating both curricular and co-curricular learning experiences. It calls for defining, identifying and prioritizing signature-learning experiences that define TCNJ's unique value. Signature learning experiences integrate scholarly and deep learning, building leadership skills and developing social/global awareness. This objective also calls for ensuring a broad range of student participation in these experiences.

Our Community Engaged Learning efforts in AY 2015-2016 have included:

- Students in COUN 551 (Substance Abuse and Addiction; Individual, Family and Society) volunteer a full day of service at Prevention Point, a needle exchange program for opioid dependent individuals and sex workers.
- Students in COUN 515 (Measurement and Evaluation) participated in a call-in event for The Trenton Violence Reduction project and collected baseline data.
- Students in COUN 552 (Prevention Strategies for Schools and Communities) are partnered with local prevention programs serving youth in the Mercer County community and draft a literature review for their partner on best practice in prevention efforts in the area of service they provide.

- Students in COUN 675 (Group Counseling) offer group facilitation to the Bonner students themselves to support their work in the community. As one of the core values of TCNJ is “The College promotes wellness and fosters the development of the whole person,” our provision of this service to Bonner students works to sustain this value and maximize the benefit of service for these students.
- Students who participate in our study abroad program in Portugal go on a series of site visits to learn about the process of decriminalizing drug use and how such policy is implemented effectively. They also meet with the European Commission on Drug Addiction, an entity of the EU. Additionally, students who were enrolled in non-addictions courses participated in a site visit to a career counseling agency as well as attended a presentation provided by the European Board for Certified Counselors (EBCC).

### **C. STUDENT AWARDS in AY 2015-2016:**

Each year our department selects student recipients for a number of different awards. The following students received their respective awards at the Chi Sigma Iota International Honor Society, Alpha Epsilon dinner and induction ceremony that occurred on Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup> 2016.

The **Douglas Burroughs Professional Commitment Award** is intended to honor a counselor education student who has demonstrated outstanding service to the community or exhibited courage or perseverance in pursuit of graduate studies. This award was created in the memory of the late Douglas Burroughs, a former TCNJ counseling student and campus leader, who overcame numerous hardships for his long quest to complete his graduate degree in counseling. The 2016 Douglas Burroughs Professional Commitment Award was given to: Ms. Mary Williams.

The **Erika Pluta-Diamond Award** honors a counseling student who has demonstrated leadership in the classroom and has expressed an interest and dedication to helping women. This award was created in memory of the late Erika Pluta-Diamond, a former TCNJ counseling student who was an avid advocate for oppressed women. This year the Erika Pluta-Diamond Award was given to Ms. Carolynne Lewis-Arevalo.

The **Social Justice and Advocacy Award** honors a graduating counseling student who has demonstrated a serious commitment to social justice and equity through the development and/or implementation of a service, program or social policy that meets the needs of, and has had a major impact upon, the health and well-being of a culturally diverse group. This year’s recipient of the Social Justice and Advocacy Award is Ms. Illiona Coreus.

The **Student Scholar of the Year Award** is intended to honor a counseling student who has demonstrated outstanding academic performance and scholarship in counseling. The 2016 Student Scholar of the Year award was given to: Ms. Carolynne Lewis-Arevalo.

The **Outstanding Counseling Student of the Year** award is intended to honor a graduating counseling student who has demonstrated outstanding academic performance and counseling skills as demonstrated by making significant and/or creative contributions as an intern, performing at an independent level significantly beyond what is expected of an intern, creating and implementing new programs at the internship site; or responding to difficult, complex and challenging client situations with exemplary expertise. This year's recipient of the Outstanding Counseling Student of the Year Award is: Ms. Dana Landesman.

The Alpha Epsilon Chapter of the Chi Sigma Iota Honor Society also offers several scholarships to current and graduating students:

The **Altruism Scholarship** is offered each year to a graduating counselor education student who has demonstrated dedication in supporting others through volunteerism, altruism, and advocacy in the field of counseling. This year's recipient of the **Chi Sigma Iota Altruism Scholarship** was Ms. Kelly Burke.

The **Pam Douglas McElroy Memorial Scholarship** honors a counseling student who has returned to school or changed career paths and who exhibits perseverance, resilience, enthusiasm, and empathy. This year's recipient was Ms. Carrie Peck.

The **Alpha Epsilon Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota Scholarship** honors a current counseling student who exhibits innovation, resourcefulness, enthusiasm, interpersonal skills, and persistence, while maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or above. This year's recipient was Debby Deroian.

#### **D. PROGRAM OUTCOMES: Vital Statistics**

**a.** Number of graduates from 2015-2016 Academic Year:

13	CACREP-Accredited <i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling</i> Program (Master of Arts in Counseling)
3	CACREP-Accredited <i>Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling and Therapy</i> Program (Master of Arts in Counseling)
24	CACREP-Accredited <i>School Counseling</i> Program (Master of Arts in Counseling)
4	Post-Masters <i>Educational Specialist Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy</i>
22	Completed all of the educational requirements for the <i>Student Assistance Coordinator in the Schools Certificate with Advanced Standing (SAC CEAS)</i>

TOTALS: 40 MA, 4 EdS, and 22 SAC CEAS

**b. Job placement rate for May 2015 graduates:**

85% of those responding to surveys (71% response rate) who actively sought jobs are currently employed in the field.

Employment rates by programs are:

92% for School Counseling

85% for Clinical Mental Health Counseling

67% for Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling and Therapy

**c. National Counselor Exam (NCE) pass rate: 97%**

**d. Program completion rates:**

92% for School Counseling

61% for Clinical Mental Health Counseling

71% for Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling and Therapy

**CONCLUSION:**

Our department maintains a strong commitment to diversity and cultural competence. In 2016, the Department of Counselor Education at TCNJ established *the first and only International School Counseling Program accredited by CACREP*. This program will be offered primarily in Lisbon, Portugal. Students who live and work in countries all over the world will be invited to apply and enroll in this program. On campus students will continue to have the opportunity to take courses at our Portugal site in the summer.

We have an active chapter (Alpha Epsilon) of Chi Sigma Iota, which facilitated important services for students such as a peer mentoring program, scholarships, networking events, and workshops on job search strategies and preparing for the National Counselor Examination. This organization continues to host an end of the year celebratory event for new inductees, award recipients, and their families.

Students, faculty, and community members have been working together to make an impact on our campus and local communities, as well as the counseling field. In addition to the aforementioned information, our graduate students have partnered with faculty to publish in textbooks and peer-reviewed journals, as well as present at conferences in our field. We continue

to maintain strong connections with our alumni who are making significant contributions to the counseling field and communities in which they live and work.