What’s Happening in the Counseling and School Psychology Programs

**AU Graduate Student Senate**

Alfred University’s Graduate Student Senate consists of representatives from all of the graduate programs on campus, in order to represent the needs of students that might not be considered at the undergraduate level.

The Graduate Student Senate has achieved a lot for Alfred University graduate students this semester. First, they developed a student satisfaction survey made available for the last month of the Fall 2012 semester. Second, they cosponsored a dress for success event with the Career Development Center. Graduate students and faculty then presented a fashion show which included good examples of business casual, business, and casual attire, and examples of common, inappropriate outfits. The event had a great turnout!

After the disastrous effects of Hurricane Sandy, AUGGS also organized a school supplies drive to provide relief for Alfred University Downstate students. AU students, faculty and staff were very generous, and donated enough supplies to schedule two trips to NYC to deliver the supplies.

*The annual Grad Student Mixer is scheduled for Friday, February 1st at 3:30PM in Howell Hall. Feel free to bring a dish, and interact with graduate students from other AU programs. Save the date!*  

**To find out more information about AUGS or to learn how to become more involved, contact Danielle Yearwood at DAY2@alfred.edu.**

**Futures Conference**

This past semester, more than 4,000 professionals participated in the Futures Conference. This conference intended to plan for the future of School Psychology by initiating conversations on how to encourage students’ overall academic success. The 3-day webinar showcased scholars and practitioners from the School Psychology field, presenting about leadership, critical skills, and advocacy. Areas varied from individual case studies, to working towards national advocacy to better serve more students. Collaboration was the focus, and the goal of the conference is to have professionals develop action plans for their local, state, and national agencies. AU was a local host of the conference. After listening to the speakers, we discussed our reactions and suggestions for the future. Available resources from the Futures Conference are available at:  
http://www.indiana.edu/~futures/.

**Faculty News from Dr. Cris Lauback**

“My sabbatical has given me an opportunity to study children with hearing loss attending a total oral communication school (meaning no sign language). The research is a part of a longitudinal study being conducted with colleagues at LaSalle University and Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech in Philadelphia. Our goal is to add to previous literature that indicates preschool D/HH children attending oral programs gain spoken language skills equal to hearing peers as they enter kindergarten. The study will follow them through third grade to determine to what extent they maintain equal language levels and most importantly early literacy abilities. The project for this fall has been to collect baseline data (nonverbal cognitive ability, receptive and expressive language levels) from preschool students who have significant hearing loss at the Clarke Schools in Philly. All of the students use either bilateral hearing aids or cochlear implants to allow access to the sound frequencies necessary for understanding spoken language.

One of the most fascinating things I have learned is how critical the acoustical environment is for these children–cork floors, solid wooden furniture, tennis balls on chair legs, special paint on everything metal, acoustical panels on ceilings and walls, no florescent lighting, absolutely no fans or motors from heaters or AC, and teachers all wear FM systems that send audio signals directly to each child’s hearing aid or CI. Another very interesting thing SP’s and SC’s need to know about is how important it is that each child gets to pick the color design of their CI equipment or hearing aid.

While in Philly I had opportunity to conduct a workshop on psychoeducational assessment for the staff at Clarke (Speech Language Pathologists, Teachers of the Deaf, Audiologists). They gained a picture of how SP’s go about their assessment work and I gained a beginning picture of the broader psychological issues presented in their unique world. The discussion got me wondering: What do SP’s and SC’s need to understand about this population, in order to better serve them and their families, once placed in the schools where we work? I hope to get some of you engaged in this conversation.”