

# CWTAP Quarterly

*Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program  
Eastern Washington University*

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## Director's Corner

Dear CWTAP Community,

A lot has been happening since our last newsletter. In winter quarter we piloted our new CWTAP elective, "Regional Core Training Topics." Gerry Charvat and Shawnti Johnson did an excellent job bringing this course to life which included a well-executed court simulation—please see inside for more.

In February, Eastern hosted the 20th Annual CWTAP Student Institute in Spokane, this year's theme was "Moving Child Welfare Forward: Promising Practices and Trends." We had a very good turnout with 135 registered participants, and 57 student presenters. We appreciated our keynote and guest speakers; Connie Lambert-Eckel, Director of Field Operations, Kim Karu, Office Moms & Dads, and a Passion to Action (P2A) panel. Many employees from the Spokane office and as far away as Sunnyside and Olympia joined us as interviewers for our Speed Interviewing event. We were able to provide 28 interviewers to accommodate the 70 non-employee students participating in the event—thank you CA volunteers! And last, but certainly not least, we honored and recognized Dr. Martha Raske, our School of Social Work Chair/Director who is retiring in June. Dr. Raske has been an avid supporter of child welfare and CWTAP, her strengths as a social worker, mentor, and leader will be missed.

With spring quarter here, we are gearing up for many CWTAP graduates. Eastern's 3-year part-time MSW programs in Everett and Spokane will be graduating, and as always, our full-time students are graduating as well. That's a total of 32 CWTAP graduates, 12 of whom are not yet CA employees, they will begin seeking work soon. Of course that means we are starting new cohorts in Everett and Spokane this summer, so far it is looking like the cohorts will be robust with many employees and non-employees alike joining CWTAP.

As always, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,  
Diana Patterson LeBlanc



## Program Spotlight

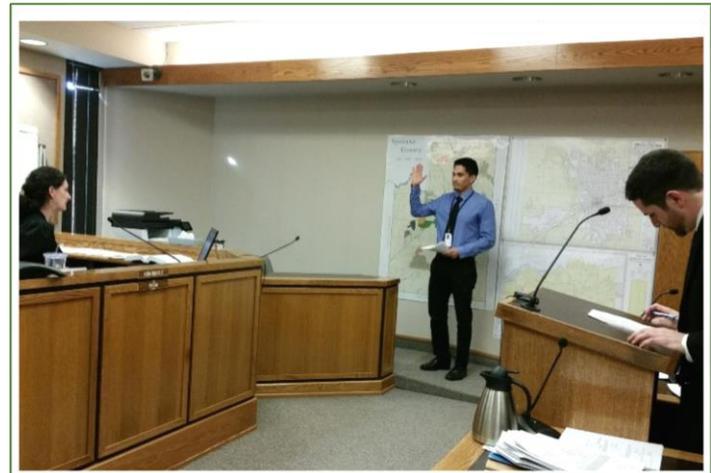
### CWTAP Elective on Regional Core Training (RCT) Topics

By Gerry Charvat

During winter quarter 2017 EWU's School of Social Work provided a specialized child welfare course for CWTAP students on Regional Core Training (RCT) topics. The course was developed to further prepare students for a career in public child welfare as part of the CWTAP course of study. The course provided a structured learning program consistent with the current RCT curriculum but tailored to students who are well established in their CWTAP practicum. The course featured key child welfare topics, such as safety assessment and planning, permanency planning, family engagement, and cultural responsiveness.

As part of the course guest speakers with unique and varied expertise provided insight into crucial aspects of the job. An Assistant Attorney General (AAG), parent's public defender, DCFS supervisor and CPS investigator presented on the dependency court process. An Office of Public Defense social worker presented on fatherhood engagement and several Alliance coaches presented topics from safety framework to caregiver engagement. The course went beyond a training and focused on key competency integration from the classroom to the field practicum.

Students were also provided an opportunity to prepare for and practice courtroom presentation in a simulated court testimony experience in which they were questioned by an actual AAG, cross-examined by a local public defender presided over by a Dependency Court Judge. The class, in combination with a specialized Children's Administration orientation and CWTAP practicum and seminar, provides students with an exceptional course of study preparing them for the challenging and rewarding field of public child welfare.



## Student Spotlight

### Meggie Mendoza – Spokane

By Gerry Charvat

Meggie Mendoza is an advanced standing CWTAP student in the inaugural cohort of the Spokane Hybrid part-time MSW program. Meggie is not currently working for Children's Administration. Her first choice for employment is the Spokane office. Meggie chose the hybrid program because of its flexibility and combination of online and in-class learning. The hybrid program is an ideal fit for her and her family, and has allowed her to be more available to her daughter before she transitions to full-time employment upon graduation in June.



Meggie obtained her BSW from Eastern Washington University in 2015 and immediately applied to the advanced standing Hybrid program. Meggie was first introduced to the field of social work when her father was diagnosed with cancer in 2011. It was a very difficult time for her and her family. Her mother needed to continue working so Meggie took on a significant caregiving role with her father. She didn't know how to deal with all of the paperwork, Social Security, home care and classes required of her on top of the emotional toll. Meggie was connected with a hospital social worker who walked her through all of the paperwork and worked with her through the whole process. Meggie admired and respected the social worker that supported her through a very difficult time. It was then that Meggie decided she wanted to be a social worker but she quickly realized that medical social work was not for her. She had developed a strong passion for children when she participated in a paid practicum at Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery and continued to stay there for over a year. Vanessa Behan offers emergency child care for families in need. Many of the families she worked with were also involved with Child Protection Services (CPS). She loved working with the families but was unable to intervene on behalf of the children or families and knew she could offer more. As part of her undergraduate program she had more exposure to public child welfare as a visitation supervisor at a local agency. She gained good insight into what the parents perceive of CPS and how removal of children impacts the entire family. This also led to her strong desire to participate in the Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program.

Meggie is married and has a wonderful 5-year-old daughter. She loves the outdoors, hiking, and spending time with her family. She believes that it takes an emotionally strong individual to participate in the CWTAP program. She also believes it is important for those interested in CWTAP to know that there is limited face to face time with children and families and that this career is more about supporting safe reunification, offering services, and "bigger picture" case management. Her advice for those considering CWTAP is to find something enjoyable in your life to balance the difficult nature of the job and seek out support from colleagues in the field who have positive attitudes.

#### Important Dates

##### May 29

Memorial Day Holiday

##### June 17

Cheney Commencement

##### June 12 – June 15

Finals Week

##### June 20

Everett Commencement at Bellevue College

##### June 17 – June 25

Break

##### June 26

Summer Instruction begins



## CWTAP Faculty &amp; Staff

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## Helpful Links

Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence: [www.allianceforchildwelfare.org](http://www.allianceforchildwelfare.org)

National Association of Social Workers: [www.naswdc.org](http://www.naswdc.org)

Child Welfare League of America: [www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)

Children's Defense Fund: [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)

Child Welfare Information Gateway: [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

Casey Family Programs: [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families: [www.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.acf.hhs.gov)

National Resource Center for Child Protective Services: [www.nrccps.org](http://www.nrccps.org)