

CWTAP Quarterly

Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program
Eastern Washington University



Important Dates

Director's Corner

Dear CWTAP Community,

Eastern is honored to host the upcoming 20th Annual CWTAP Student Institute, "Moving Child Welfare Forward: Promising Practices and Trends." The conference is being held at the Hotel RL in Spokane on February 24-26. We anticipate a strong student turnout and have received a record number of presentation submissions on a variety of important Child Welfare topics.

This quarter Eastern launched our newest child welfare elective "CWTAP: Regional Core Training." This course is designed to provide our non-employee CWTAP students with the content they would normally receive in RCT. In addition, we have infused other learning into the curriculum to prepare students to be as "field ready" as possible upon graduation. The course is being taught by CWTAP Field Instructors Gerry Charvat and Shawnti Johnson, both long-time Children's Administration social workers and supervisors.

These are exciting times and we look forward to sharing more news and updates soon. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Diana Patterson LeBlanc

February 20

Presidents' Day Holiday

February 21

Spring Registration Begins

February 24-26

CWTAP Student Institute

March 20-24

Finals Week

March 25 – April 2

Spring Break

April 3

Spring Instruction Begins

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Introducing our newest staff member

Eastern is proud to announce our newest staff member, Amanda Heye-Landaker. Amanda comes to us from the College of Arts, Letters and Education at Eastern's Cheney campus. Amanda will be serving as our statewide program coordinator; she will be based in Everett. Please join us in welcoming Amanda to our team!

Student Spotlight

Ray Soriano – Everett Part-Time Program

By Shawnti Johnson

Ray Soriano is a current CWTAP student at the Everett Part-Time Program, participating in a workplace practicum with DLR/CPS at the Bellingham field office. Over the past 28 years, Ray has been working and volunteering with the purpose of furthering the safety and development of children. His career has been a tapestry of work as Director and Facilitator with a multitude of Early Childhood Education Programs across the Puget Sound region, as well as an Investigator for CPS and DLR/CPS at Children's Administration. Ray has forever been drawn to the people with the hard stories and feels comfortable being present for and connected to the work towards trauma recovery. He describes it as a calling that he heard early in his life.



In 1971, Ray's parents embarked on a courageous journey, and with seven children and \$200, immigrated to the United States, settling in Seattle. As a first generation, bicultural "American kid with Philippine values," Ray was witness and participant to a community that taught him the virtues of humility, altruism, connectedness to family and the value of culture and community. As Ray's mother and sister have passed away, they live on through the closeness and interconnectedness of the family and their demonstrated embodiment of these virtues and values. Ray, with his 16-year-old son, who loves school and sports, now passes this life view on to the next generation. His son and his family's immigration story are sources of pride and inspiration to continue the work of providing support and positive influence in people's lives. He believes that with compassion and guidance, folks can heal from hard situations.

In his early 20's, Ray began what would become his career journey through residential treatment programs, early childhood education, public child welfare, and beyond. Passionate about helping others heal so that they discover their mission and connect to their purpose, Ray believes it is possible to have a compassionate and human approach to create intentional connection even within large systems. Blessed with a musical disposition, Ray uses his talents with guitar and percussion to facilitate drumming groups, remarking "...arts are vital to peoples healing stories." Looking towards the future, he plans to continue leadership and advocacy for fathers involved in systems of oppression. He also hopes to pursue teaching in social work and human services, provide program consultation and work towards a clinical license to provide a therapeutic music program to help people heal their trauma.

Ray continues to answer his calling to social work and wishes to continue the cultivation of compassion and connectedness to build peoples capacity to heal, to help them to be stronger, emotionally, physically and spiritually. We are wonderfully blessed to have Ray as a part of the EWU MSW Program and as a fellow social worker.

Helpful Links

Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence: www.allianceforchildwelfare.org

National Association of Social Workers: www.naswdc.org

Child Welfare League of America: www.cwla.org

Children's Defense Fund: www.childrensdefense.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway: www.childwelfare.gov

Casey Family Programs: www.casey.org

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families: www.acf.hhs.gov

National Resource Center for Child Protective Services: www.nrc cps.org

Alumni Spotlight



Stephanie Bieber – Vancouver

By Erinn Havig

This issue's Alumni Spotlight features Stephanie Bieber. Stephanie graduated from the Vancouver MSW program in June 2015. Throughout Stephanie's life she has always been a natural helper and volunteer. She volunteered in Clark County with our TeenTalk program which provides peer support for teens in our community and was a TIP (Trauma Intervention Program) Teen providing crisis support to teens during school or community crisis. She has always been looking for ways to volunteer and help others and that spirit is ever present in her work at Children's Administration.

Synchronicity played a large role in Stephanie's path. In her undergraduate studies, she had initially pursued a path to become a therapist but in taking courses related to families in poverty and child abuse and neglect, she shifted her focus to social work because of how this field allows more comprehensive focus in a person's life and the areas that impact a person's life. She found out about the Eastern Washington University program two weeks prior to the deadline to apply and was successful in presenting a great application. Shortly after, she learned about CWTAP. She did her foundation field experience in the office with a very skilled social worker and was hired with one year left in her education. She has been a Child and Family Welfare Services worker in the same unit since July 2014. Stephanie consistently goes above and works to help her co-workers in many ways. One example is helping with a CFWS Handbook that the Vancouver office uses. This handbook details all the specifics of the CFWS position and is very helpful to workers in the office.

In talking with Stephanie about how she makes her job manageable and any tips she would have for other students, she was extremely gracious and willing to share. One of the things she learned from her AFI was that you can't get everything done and to accept what you are able to do. Stephanie uses a system of work prioritization and deadlines to make the work manageable for her. Court reports first, Health and Safety visits in the first two weeks of the month and any additional deadlines have a due date to her of a week before they are due to anyone else. This allows her to deal with weather crisis or scheduling difficulties without missing due dates. She felt the most difficult part of this job is that you can't please everyone. She works hard to be proactive and honest with families and lets all parties know about hard conversations as early as possible. Her advice for interns was to take every advantage of opportunities as an intern – learn how to do a Health & Safety visit, learn how to do an ICPC and watch court proceedings, see everything and participate as fully as you can so you have had many different experiences going into employment. When asked what she thinks would improve the system, her answers were honest and direct – more foster homes, a stronger community approach, lower caseloads and increased in-home services.

Outside of work, Stephanie is a single mother to three amazing kids ages 8, 6, and 3. Her interests include stand-up paddle boarding, home improvement projects on her new home, and spending quality time with her family here and in Walla Walla.

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