



University of Michigan Genetic Counseling Program

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Fall 2018

Celebrating Elizabeth Kearney: The 2018 Diane Baker Alumni Award Recipient



Diane Baker & Elizabeth Kearney

The UMGCP recently honored Elizabeth Kearney MS, LCGC, MBA (Class of 1996), the 9th recipient of the Diane Baker Alumni Award. Throughout her career, Liz has held several unique clinical and commercial positions at organizations like Kaiser Permanente, Johnson & Johnson, Cord Blood Registry, Veracyte, and PWNHealth. The diversity of her professional expertise has been supported not only by her training in Genetic Counseling, but also by her completion of an MBA in Marketing from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, which uniquely prepared her to serve as President of the National Society of Genetic Counselors in 2010.

Liz is a true innovator, as demonstrated in her talk, 'Genetic Odyssey: How Artificial Intelligence is Changing Genetic Services,' in which she explored the evolution of artificial intelligence (AI) technology and its current uses in healthcare. Liz highlighted the benefits and limitations of AI and explored the applications of technology to genomics, including variant interpretation in genome sequencing, precision medicine in oncology, diagnostic assistance with facial recognition technology, and even using chatbots for care delivery.

Her thought-provoking talk was very well received and generated much discussion. A recording can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6wfjvCKuQs>.

In addition to her lecture to the Department of Human Genetics, Liz led a Leadership Workshop for second year students. Students explored their personal definitions of leadership, brainstormed the qualities of good leaders, and reflected on their core values. Ultimately, students were challenged to create their own personal visions for leadership.

Additionally, first year students had the opportunity to attend a workshop with Diane Baker, UMGCP Program Founder & Director from 1979-2001. The workshop focused on the importance of collaborations and coalitions. Our students really enjoyed Diane's perspective on the importance of dedication, respect, and enthusiasm as you work to motivate others to join a collaborative effort.

Congratulations Logan Karns!



We are thrilled to announce that Logan B. Karns, MS, LCGC is the recipient of the 2018 Outstanding Supervisor Award, collaboratively bestowed by the University of Michigan Genetic Counseling Program and the Association of Genetic Counseling Program Directors.

Logan is a genetic counselor specializing in prenatal and reproductive genetics at the University of Virginia who has been a well-loved supervisor and mentor for the UMGCP since 2004. Logan has hosted intensive summer clinical internships for 8 students (and counting). Recognized as a "Master Genetic Counselor" by NSGC, Logan is a quintessential psychosocial counselor who helps students follow her example while also empowering them to craft their own unique clinical style. She is uniformly praised for providing a supportive and encouraging environment that allows students to build confidence in their counseling skills. The time she puts into talking with students about their cases and providing constructive feedback empowers them to step out of their comfort zones as they work to become more empathic clinicians. Her students note she is genuinely kind and warm, enabling deep dialogue and self-reflection. Logan is valued for treating students like colleagues and for providing mentorship that extends well beyond the end of graduate training.

Congratulations Logan! We can't thank you enough for your generosity, wisdom, and thoughtfulness.

Kudos to Our Award Winning Students

UMGCP student Lauren Seemann was one of six genetic counseling students to be awarded a Jane Engelberg Memorial Fellowship this year. Funding from this award will help support her thesis work, *"Assessing Need and Utility of a Machine Learning Algorithm for Pedigree Analysis."* Based on the quality of her research proposal, Lauren also received the 2018-2019 James V. Neel Research Fellowship.

Diane Koeller, a member of the UMGCP Class of 2016 and a previous recipient of a JEMF Student Research Award, was recently awarded the JEMF Best Manuscript Award for her paper, *"Utilization of Genetic Counseling after Direct-to-Consumer Genetic Testing: Findings from the Impact of Personal Genomics (PGen) Study,"* published in the December 2017 Journal of Genetic Counseling.

Amanda Schaefer, another current student, was awarded an NSGC Research Special Interest Group Grant Award to support her thesis, *"Exploring Ethical and Professional Challenges Encountered by Clinical Genetic Counselors Who Are Engaged in Research."*

Second year student Kelsie McVeety received a Michigan Association of Genetic Counselors Student Research Award for her thesis work *"Development of an Educational Video to Address Sickle Cell Trait and Disease Knowledge Gaps in NCAA Student-Athletes."*

The Michigan Mentorship Program

Can you remember back to your final year of graduate training? Needing to focus on learning and growing, but also needing to find a job. A time of excitement. A time of change. And maybe a time of disquiet. This year we established the Michigan Mentorship Program that pairs a senior graduate student with a member of our alumni community to help them navigate the imminent transition from graduate school into independent clinical practice.

We had an incredible response to our call for alumni volunteers this past summer and want to thank everyone who agreed to share their time to serve as a mentor.

This program is an important contribution to our vision of ensuring that our graduates emerge as extremely well rounded genetic counselors, who are ready to meet the current challenges in clinical genomic medicine and are able to help guide the evolving practice of genetic counseling and genomic medicine. So far, we have had very positive feedback on this program from both our current students and our alumni. We look forward to sharing some insights from the program at the end of this academic year and hope that the benefits of the Michigan Mentorship Program will extend to both our students and our alumni mentors.

Welcome to Our Incoming Genetic Counseling Students

This fall we welcomed nine outstanding new students to the UMGCP. The students arrived from near and far, with unique academic, social, and personal backgrounds. The year is off to a great start and we look forward to joining them on their journey through graduate school.

Elysa Bond graduated from St. Olaf College with her B.A. in Biology and Music. While at St. Olaf, she worked as a Wellness Center Peer Educator and Supplemental Instruction Leader in Biology. Following graduation, Elysa volunteered for Crisis Text Line and worked with genetic counselors at Reproductive Genetic Innovations in Northbrook, IL as a Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis Coordinator.



Rachel Gosselin earned her B.S. in Biology from Carroll University in Wisconsin. She served as a summer genetic counseling intern in the Cancer Genetics Clinic at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Rachel's advocacy experiences included supporting victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking at the Women's Center in Waukesha, WI and volunteering in Best Buddies which works to build friendships with individuals with disabilities.

Ilana Miller earned her B.S. in Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience from U of M. As an undergraduate, she conducted research examining why Planned Parenthood clients at risk for hereditary breast and ovarian cancer tend to underutilize genetic services. After graduating, she was a post-bac research fellow at the National Human Genome Research Institute, where she focused on participants' attitudes, reactions, and preferences regarding genetic testing. She also volunteered as a hotline crisis advocate for the D.C. Rape Crisis Center.

Farid Barquet Ramos graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology with a B.S. in Biotechnology and Molecular Bioscience, a secondary major in Biomedical Sciences, and immersion in Deaf Cultural Studies and American Sign Language. His advocacy experiences included volunteering at RESTORE, a program of Planned Parenthood where he served as an advocate for victims of sexual assault, and working as a phone counselor for The Center for Youth.

Nicholette Sloat comes to us with a B.S. in Psychology, minors in Biology & French and an M.A. in General Psychology from the University of Dayton. She has worked at Cincinnati Children's Hospital on an NIH-sponsored study of Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) in school-aged children focused on understanding the presentation and diagnosis of APD. Nicholette also served as a clinical service provider for the crisis and care line at Talbert House, a greater Cincinnati non-profit, and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Mackenzie Trapp earned her B.S. in Cell/Molecular Biology from Appalachian State University. Her undergraduate research focused on characterizing a highly conserved tetrapod regulatory element associated with Meis2 in the zebrafish model system. She gained her advocacy experiences with the Crisis Text Line as well as visiting hospital patients with her therapy dog, Rory. Following graduation, Mackenzie worked at UNC's Cancer and Adult Genetics clinics in both clinical and basic science research.

Anna Vercruyssen earned her B.S. in Biology with a focus in Marine Biology from Oregon State University. As an undergraduate she examined the evolutionary development of selfish genetic elements in the mitochondrial DNA of sea anemones. She also worked as a crisis line advocate at Oregon's central domestic violence and sexual assault hotline, Call to Safety. Most recently, Anna worked as a program coordinator for Oregon Health & Science University's Family Medicine Residency Program.

Austin Whitted earned his B.S. in Human Biology from Michigan State University and was part of a research team studying nucleotide excision repair pathways. Most recently he served as an Americorps/National College Advising Corps college advisor and helped high school students navigate a pathway to pursuing post-secondary education. Austin is a dual degree student in genetic counseling and public health, with specific interests in global health.

Kristen Wong graduated from Clemson University with her B.S. in Genetics and minors in Psychology & Microbiology. While at Clemson, she helped identify genes involved in the senescence of corn and worked as a Wellness Ambassador with the Clemson Honors College to help reduce stress, depression, and anxiety in students while promoting overall wellness. She also volunteered with the Volunteer Ministry Center to help those at risk for homelessness find greater housing stability.

SAVE THE DATES!!!

UMGCP Reception-NSGC

Friday November 16, 2018 7:00-9:00 PM
Fado Irish Pub Midtown Atlanta
933 Peachtree St.
Northeast Atlanta, GA 30309

Marc Williams: "Patient-Centered Precision Health In A Learning Health Care System: Geisinger's Genomic Medicine Experience for Health: Augmenting Clinical Care."

November 29, 2018 at 12:00-1:30 PM
Palmer Commons, Great Lakes Room

Deadline to Register for Genetic Counseling Admissions Match

December 14, 2018

2019 UM Genetic Counseling Program Admissions

Application deadline: January 4, 2019

More information can be found on the GCP website