



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2018!



- Jamie Love-Nichols: Genetic Counselor, Boston Children’s Hospital, Department of Neurology, Boston, MA
- Carolyn Serbinski: Genetic Counselor, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati, OH
- Lauren Turner: Maternal Fetal Medicine Genetic Counselor, Oregon Health Sciences University, Portland, OR
- Kestutis Micke: Genetic Counselor, Children’s Hospital Colorado, Denver, CO
- Erin Nordquist: Genetic Counselor-Adult Cancer Genetics, Providence Health & Services, Spokane, WA
- Caitlin Reid: Associate Genetic Counselor, University of Iowa Health Care- Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center, Iowa City, IA
- Stephanie Wiryaman: Cancer Genetic Counselor, Maine Medical Center, Portland, ME

Kestutis Micke, Jamie Love-Nichols, Stephanie Wiryaman, Caitlin Reid, Carolyn Serbinski, Lauren Turner, Erin Nordquist

On Friday, April 27, 2018, the members of the UMGCPC Class of 2018 will officially earn their graduate degrees in Genetic Counseling. The festivities will include a gathering at Program Director Bev Yashar’s home, followed by the official conferring of degrees during Rackham’s graduation ceremony, and a graduation ceremony at the Big House.

Life scientist and U-M alumnus David Walt will deliver the address at Rackham’s graduation ceremony. Walt played an important role in revolutionizing genetic studies, as the inventor of microwell arrays and founder of Illumina. Charles Woodson will return to Michigan Stadium to deliver the commencement address at the campus wide U-M ceremony. In addition to his stellar performance at U-M and in the NFL, Woodson established the Charles Woodson Foundation. Through his foundation, Woodson created multiple scholarships for University students, and in 2009, he donated \$2 million to C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital.

We wish the members of the Class of 2018 the best and look forward to their contributions to our profession.

Building on Research Success: Exploring Planned Parenthood’s Cancer Screening Tool

There is a growing tradition of legacy thesis projects at UMGCPC, where current students build upon the outcomes and successes of the work of past students. We are excited to highlight one set of such projects focused on the evaluation and improvement of a novel cancer genetics screening tool utilized at Planned Parenthood. Samantha Greenberg, MS, MPH (Class of 2016) has championed these efforts given her passion for improving access to genetic services.

During her graduate studies, Samantha used a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the implementation of the screening tool from the perspective of clinicians. Samantha found that clinicians were confident in their ability to administer and interpret the results of the tool, but were less confident in their genetic knowledge. She then addressed this concern with educational modules, which increased clinicians’ confidence in their ability to connect patients to genetics services. Samantha’s findings were recently published in the Journal of Community Genetics.

With mentorship from Samantha and the Genetic Counseling Program, this line of work was continued by a then U-M undergraduate student, Ilana Miller, who investigated the motivators and barriers of women who were identified as high-risk through Planned Parenthood’s screening tool. Ilana’s study, which was recently submitted for publication, found that patients were interested in and intended to seek genetic services, but identified financial burden and worry as barriers.

In the 3rd phase of this work, current genetic counseling and public health student Elise Sobotka is planning to use focus groups to further elicit Planned Parenthood patients’ needs surrounding genetic services. Her research project will build upon Samantha and Ilana’s work using patient-centered outcomes research methodology.



Samantha Greenberg, Elise Sobotka, Ilana Miller

ABGC Board Examination: Continued Success!



Congratulations to our 2017 alumni Christopher Deffer, Sarah Drewes, Tessa Marzulla, Sarah Mazzola, Kelly Watkins and Beatrix Wong who recently joined the ranks of ABGC Certified Genetic Counselors. Once again, 100% of our graduates passed the board examination on their first attempt (compared to the national first time candidate pass rate of approximately 90%). We are proud of this accomplishment, which is a testament to their hard work, intellect and training.

Welcoming New Genetic Counselors to the University of Michigan!

We are thrilled that 2018 brings several new genetic counselors to the Michigan Medicine community. Andrea Murad began her work as a genetic counselor at UM Cancer Genetics in January, 2018. Andrea earned her MS in Genetic Counseling from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine in 2015. Prior to joining the University of Michigan, she worked as a genetic counselor in the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Andrea is passionate about promoting the value of the genetic counseling profession and has been involved in licensure activities in Tennessee and in the development of NSGC Practice Guidelines. In June, Sarah Austin will begin working as the sixth genetic counselor in the UM Cancer Genetics group. Sarah will be graduating with her MS in Genetic Counseling from Wayne State University in May. She brings an interest in cascade screening for hereditary cancer risk, having completed her research thesis in this area. Our 3rd new Michigan Medicine genetic counselor, Jessica Omark, will begin working with Pediatric Genetics in the spring. Jessica will be receiving her MS in Genetic Counseling from the University of Texas Health Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Jessica has also served as an intern for Genetics and Rare Diseases Information Center. Finally, this spring Bailey Hulswit will be starting as a genetic counselor at the UM Breast and Ovarian Cancer Risk Evaluation Clinic. She will be receiving her MS in Genetic Counseling from Wayne State University in May. Bailey also brings interesting insight from her service on the Michigan Biotrust for Health Community Values Advisory Board. With the addition of these four genetic counselors, Michigan Medicine employs 24 clinical genetic counselors, more than any other institution in the state.

Summer Genetic Counseling Interest Group



The University of Michigan Genetic Counseling Program will be conducting our 5th annual UM Summer Genetic Counseling Interest Group for individuals considering entering the profession. During the months of June, July and August, we will be meeting one evening per month through group video calls. The goals of the discussions are to increase participants' vocabulary related to genetic counseling and allow for interactions with practicing genetic counselors at the University of Michigan. Topics discussed during the group video

calls will be informed by the interests of the participants and are expected to cover multiple areas of clinical genetic/genomic practice. If you are interested in participating in the Summer Genetic Counseling Interest Group, please sign up at <https://goo.gl/forms/seoTUZARslfLs1I2> by May 18,

Ophthalmology Genetic Counselors: Playing a Key Role at Michigan Medicine

Genetics has been an important component of patient care at the UM Kellogg Eye Center since 1941, and genetic counselors have been a part of this work since the mid-1990s. The number of causative genes involved in inherited retinal dystrophies like retinitis pigmentosa and Stargardt disease has grown from 50 to more than 250 since 1999, and patient volume has increased 46% since 2011.



Today, genetic counselors Kari Branham and Dana Schlegel work to serve this patient population alongside a team of ophthalmologists, technicians, patient service associates, researchers, and electrophysiologists. Kari started working at Kellogg in 1999 as a research assistant and left to earn her degree in genetic counseling in 2001. After graduating from the UMGCP, she returned to Kellogg as a genetic counselor. With nearly 20 years of experience in the field, Kari is an international expert on retinal dystrophies. Dana Schlegel started at Kellogg after earning dual degrees from the UMGCP and UM School of Public Health in 2014.

In addition to providing genetic counseling to patients at risk for or affected by inherited retinal dystrophies and other eye conditions, both Kari and Dana are involved with implementing clinical trials, collaborating with international teams of geneticists, spearheading research into the use of machine learning to predict causative mutations, as well as teaching and supervising genetic counseling and medical students. They are also excited about the start of a recently FDA approved gene therapy for Leber congenital amaurosis. Kari and Dana play invaluable roles in the Michigan Medicine community as clinicians, researchers, and educators.

SAVE THE DATES!!!

GC Student Research Presentations
Fridays April 6, 13, and 20, 2018
4-5 pm 5915 Buhl

UMGCP Graduation Party at Bev's House
April 26, 2018, 7-9 pm
740 Heather Way

GC Admissions Match Results Release Day
April 27, 2018

18th Annual James V Neel Lecture in Human Genetics
May 24, 2018, 2 pm
BSRB Kahn Auditorium
Dr. Uta Francke

Joint UM/WSU Genetic Counseling Supervisor Workshop in Detroit
June 1, 2018

Fall Orientation for Incoming Students
August 29-31, 2018

Fall Classes Begin
September 4, 2018

An Introduction to the UM Genetic Counseling Program
Intended Audience: Prospective Applicants
October 5, 2018
More details coming this summer

For more information about any of these events, contact: Monica Marvin at monicama@umich.edu