

## GENETIC COUNSELING PROGRAM

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/UMGCPROGRAM](https://tinyurl.com/umgcpprogram)

## Congratulations to the UMGCP Class of 2023

Congratulations to the Class of 2023 as they finish up their graduate training and begin to celebrate their accomplishments. We will be welcoming them to the ranks of alumni of the UMGCP at the end of April, and we cannot wait to see what they accomplish as they start their careers at the following institutions:

**Nicole Cho-** Michigan Medicine Rogel Cancer Center

**Charlie DeLuca-** Children's Hospital of Michigan Division of Genetic, Genomic and Metabolic Disorders

**Lara Grether-** Royal Oak Hospital, Maternal Fetal Medicine and Reproductive Genetics

**Leah Hardy-** University of New Mexico Division of Pediatric Genetics

**Braeden Hughes-** Medical College of Wisconsin Department of Pediatrics

**Blake Summers-** University of Kansas Cancer Center



## UMGCP Works to Develop Guiding Principles Related to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Through the months of October through March, the UMGCP worked with our current students, alumni, clinical supervisors, and classroom instructors to develop guiding principles. The Guiding Principles are intended to inform ongoing and future efforts to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion within the University of Michigan Genetic Counseling Program.

In order to ensure that the guiding principles were developed with consideration of the various members of our community, input was sought from each of these 'stakeholder' groups. Brainstorming sessions were hosted with current students, alumni, clinical supervisors, and classroom instructors to gather insight into how members of our community would articulate the values of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion within the UMGCP and how these values would be portrayed within our community environment.

With these valuable perspectives that were shared, the UMGCP JEDI Guiding Principles Task Force worked to consider and consolidate these ideas through multiple, iterative discussions. After a draft of the Guiding Principles was established, further feedback was sought from all members of the community to verify that these principles were reflective of the intentions and ideas expressed during the brainstorming sessions.

These guiding principles are not intended to represent a plan or set of activities, but will help inform what comes next, including defining priorities and an action plan. We anticipate that these principles will evolve over time and are committed to listening, learning, and growing as we plan forward and consider the full scope of what justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion look like within the UMGCP.

The Guiding Principles can be found on our website at:

<https://medicine.umich.edu/dept/human-genetics/academics/genetic-counseling-program/diversity-equity-inclusion-guiding-principles>

The UMGCP is now transitioning into action planning, and we look forward to sharing updates.

We want to extend a huge 'thank you' to the members of our Task Force that assisted in the development of the guiding principles!

Lara Grether  
Amy Mook  
Colby Chase  
Bridget O'Connor  
Nicole Huser Blum  
JoAnn Sekiguchi

## Celebrating Dr. Beverly Yashar's 20 Years as Program Director

In June 2022, Dr. Beverly Yashar stepped down from her 20-year tenure as Program Director of the University of Michigan Genetic Counseling Program (UMGCP). Under her direction, the UMGCP developed into one of the most prestigious training programs in the country.

On May 10, 2023, we will celebrate Bev's accomplishments by hosting a UMGCP Alumni Symposium featuring Samantha Greenberg, Barry Tong, and Brittney Dye Murray. Please join us in Forum Hall at Palmer Commons at 2:00 p.m. for the alumni seminars followed by a reception at 4:00 p.m. in the Great Lakes Room.

Bev has been kind enough to participate in a quick interview with us to give us more insights on her successful career!



**Beverly Yashar**

### **What has been the most rewarding part of being the Program Director?**

"Having had the honor to work with students that have such a wide range of backgrounds, interests and visions of how they want to move through graduate training and use their genetic counseling degree has been very rewarding. Each of them has challenged me to think differently about what it means to be a graduate student and a genetic counselor. The end result is that I have had to continually redefine my role as director of graduate training. This means that the job is always exciting and a journey of self discovery. Additionally, engaging with the different voices of students and seeing what they choose to do with the tools we provided them in graduate training has been so exciting."

### **Is there an incident during your time as Director that cracks you up whenever you recall it?**

"Over the years, it has become a tradition for graduating students to share a small gift with each of the program leaders at graduation. In my office, there is a baseball and whistle that I received from the first class I trained that is labeled "To: Coach, From: The Team". It memorializes a trip that I took with this class to attend a regional genetic counseling clinic in Columbus, Ohio. The trip was filled with a wide variety of (mis)adventures, including failing to realize how hard it is to get a reservation for 8 at a decent hotel in Columbus on a game weekend, driving through incredibly bad weather and underestimating the impact of arriving in Columbus in a van with a Michigan logo on the side. When I was finally able to find a place for the students to stay, it was at a motel that traditionally houses out-of-town athletes. When all of us trooped into the lobby of the motel, the clerk just assumed that we were a sports team- not something that most groups of genetic counselors are mistaken for. I tried to explain to the clerk what a genetic counselor was, but after failing multiple times, we finally agreed that we were a women's athletic group from Michigan. Needless to say this cracked up the class many times over the subsequent year."

### **What are you most looking forward to with this transition?**

"Being in Ann Arbor has been wonderful, with its many resources and friends. With this role transition, I'm looking forward to having more time to spend with family, including my husband, siblings, sons, grandsons and daughters-in-law, and having the time to enjoy their lives. I'm also looking forward to watching my grandsons grow up!"

### **As you've had the opportunity to watch and assist with developing the changing landscape of our profession, where do you see our profession going next? What skills or ideas have you instilled in future genetic counselors to implement this change?**

"Genetic counseling in the future? It will continue to follow our evolving ability to interrogate the genome and use this knowledge to provide information for a broader range of diagnoses that move beyond Mendelian diseases. Polygenic risk scores are one component that will allow us to do this, but the knowledge and skills of GCs of the future will include using the transcriptome, the proteome and the epigenome in addition to the genome. While the knowledge GCs will need will continue to expand, the skills of placing the patient front and center will not change. I believe that those who have trained with me have curiosity and a passion to learn, the desire to provide the best care for our patients, self understanding of the limits of our knowledge and skills and the bravery to move into new territories of knowledge in pursuit of providing the highest quality of patient care."

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## Summer GC Interest Group

The University of Michigan will be conducting our 10th 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 via Zoom. The goals of the discussions are to increase participants' vocabulary related to genetic counseling and allow for interactions with practicing genetic counselors and genetic counseling students at the University of Michigan. Topics discussed during the Zoom calls are expected to cover multiple areas of clinical genetic/genomic practice. The sign up for the Summer GC Interest Group will be released on May 12 through our mailing list. We continue to have an incredible response each year, so we encourage you to sign up early due to the limited number of registrants we are able to accommodate. Also, please ensure that you are available for the timeslot(s) that you sign up for.

## Snapshots of UMGCP- Winter 2023



Our students kept the Cabin Weekend tradition alive and spent time together in Cromwell, IN at the beginning of April



Our students put together a culturally-themed potluck where each student prepared a dish from their culture(s)

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

GC Admissions Match Results Release Day

Thursday, April 27, 2023

DHG Graduation Reception

2:00-4:00 PM- 2960 THSL

Thursday, April 27, 2023

UMGCP Graduation Reception

(private event)

Tuesday, May 2, 2023

22nd Annual James V. Neel Lectureship

"Creating the Fourth Chapter of Human Genomics"

presented by Eric Green, M.D., Ph.D.

12:00 PM Lecture- Kahn Auditorium, BSRB

2:00 PM Poster Session &amp; Reception- Seminar Rooms, BSRB

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

UMGCP Alumni Symposium

Honoring Beverly Yashar

2:00 PM Alumni Seminars- Forum Hall, Palmer Commons

4:00 PM Reception- Great Lakes Room, Palmer Commons

Friday, May 12, 2023

Sign up for Summer GC Interest Group

Friday, June 9, 2023

UM/WSU GC Supervisor Workshop

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

Fall Orientation for Incoming Students

Begins

Monday, August 28, 2023

Fall Classes Begin

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