Dear Alumni,

Hopefully you have all received the good news sent earlier this summer about the generous 3 to 1 match offered by Dr. and Mrs. Carl Huether to grow the Huether Endowment to $100,000. To reach the $100,000 goal, we have to raise $10,000. We are very excited to announce that we have made good progress and are nearly halfway towards this goal. I was thrilled and grateful to see the names of many alumni donors, in addition to many faculty and staff in the Division of Human Genetics. Solicitation and sales pitches are not something that come naturally to me, however as the Program’s director, I realize what a great opportunity this match presents for future classes.

The Huether Endowment Fund is reserved exclusively to benefit students. Currently funds are used to help offset the cost of attending the NSGC Annual Education Conference for second year students. My hope is that someday the fund can also help support student scholarships. As you know, at the NSGC Annual Education Conference, students learn about developments in clinical practice, advances in genetic technology and cutting edge research in the field. They also learn about leadership opportunities with NSGC and begin building professional networks. This conference is a critical piece of their development as genetic counseling professionals and they are truly excited for the opportunity it presents. However, for some attending the conference is a financial hardship and the Endowment helps alleviate some of the financial burden.

Perhaps you have benefited from the Endowment fund or other scholarship funds in the past. I hope you will consider donating today. No amount is too small. To donate, click here:

Warmly,

Melanie Myers, MS, Ph.D, CGC.
Program Director
Congratulations to the Class of 2015!

On May 1st, 2015, the students of the GCP Class of 2015 received their diplomas and became genetic counselors! They were joined by proud faculty, friends, and family to celebrate everything they had accomplished over their 2 years in the GCP: coursework, clinical rotations, research, and professional development.

At the graduation reception, we shared memories, achievements, and lots of laughs! Speakers included Dr. Melanie Myers, Carrie Atzinger, Katie Wusik, and Bette Young, who highlighted the dedication, kindness, and perseverance of the graduating class. Graduates Rachel Fischer and Janel Phetteplace spoke on behalf of their class to thank faculty and family for their ongoing support and to share memories of their time in the GCP.

We wish the Class of 2015 all the best as they embark on an exciting new chapter of their lives. We will miss your positive attitudes and permanent smiles around the GCP!

Leandra Tolusso
Student (Class of 2016)
Sarah Adelsperger is working at ProMedica Flower Hospital in Sylvania, OH as a cancer genetic counselor. She will also provide monthly clinics in Fostoria, Fremont, and Defiance, OH.

Katlin Allsbrook is working in Dayton, OH at Dayton Children’s Hospital seeing patients in cardiology, neurology, cancer and pediatric settings. She is very excited to be starting her career at one of the sites where she rotated during her training!

Cassie Bac is working at Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago as a general pediatric genetic counselor.

Jana Basil is working as a lab counselor in the Cytogenetics Laboratory at CCHMC. She will also be working in the General Genetics and Eye Genetics Clinics.

Caitlin Campbell is working for Integrated Genetics in San Diego, CA as a prenatal genetic counselor.

Rachel Fisher is working in the pediatric genetics department for the University of Michigan as a clinical genetic counselor and developing a program to manage positive results for genetic diseases that have been recently added to the Michigan newborn screen.

Samantha Freeze is working in Indianapolis, IN as a cardiovascular genetic counselor at Indiana University through Riley Hospital for Children.

Joe Jacher is a pediatric genetic counselor at Michigan State University and also staffs a bleeding and clotting disorder clinic twice per month.

Andrea Murad is working at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. She is splitting her time between cardiovascular genetic counseling and research responsibilities.

Janel Phetteplace is splitting her time between the neurology and cardiology departments at the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics in Iowa City, IA. She primarily sees patients with neuromuscular disorders, cardiomyopathies, and cardiac arrhythmias.

Caitlin Reinert is a pediatric genetic counselor at Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, with a special interest in pediatric cardiology and oncology. She has been spending most of her free time exploring her new city and planning her wedding!

“One of my favorite memories is when Andrea cooked Middle Eastern food for us and we spent the evening talking, laughing, eating great food, and drinking wine!”
- Caitlin Reinert (and Sarah Adelsperger, too!)

“My favorite memory would be coming back at the beginning of the second year and seeing all of my classmates after not having seen most of them for the entire summer.”
- Katlin Allsbrook

“Overall our time getting to know each other, laughing, and supporting each other through the many challenges in the program are what stick in my mind.”
- Jana Basil

“One of my favorite moments from the program was when they had a picnic for us right after we completed our first year - we all went to the park and played games and had lunch.
- Andrea Murad
Class of 2016—Summer Fun!

Hannah Balka: Rockford Memorial Hospital in Rockford, IL, as a prenatal, cancer and pediatric counselor.

The members of the Class of 2016 have been busy learning new skills during their offsite summer rotations. Here is what they have been up to!

Kanchi Barfiwala: Good Samaritan and Bethesda North in Cincinnati, OH, as a prenatal counselor.

Hayley Grandine: Weisskopf Center in Louisville, KY, as a prenatal and cancer counselor, and at CCHMC in the neuromuscular clinic.

Lauren Maynard: Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, AZ, as a primarily cancer counselor. She will also participate in the Understand Your Genome project and present on whole genome sequencing.

Kait Miller: Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, FL, as a cancer counselor.

Lauren Maynard: Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, AZ, as a primarily cancer counselor. She will also participate in the Understand Your Genome project and present on whole genome sequencing.

Randa Newman: Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, TN, as a prenatal counselor, and Baptist Health Lexington in Lexington, KY, as a cancer counselor.

Meghann Reardon: The Women’s Hospital in Newburgh, IN, as a cancer and prenatal counselor.

Alyssa Ritter: Women’s Specialty Center in West Chester, PA, as a cancer counselor.

Rania Sheikh: George Washington Hospital in Washington, DC, as a prenatal counselor.

Leandra Tolusso: Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa, Ontario, as a cancer and prenatal counselor.

Kelly Warsinske: Mercy Health St. Mary’s in Grand Rapids, MI, as a cancer counselor.

Fun Fact: My family and I received genetic counseling for Marfan Syndrome at RMH in 1998!

Best memory of first year: Dr. Hufnagel getting so excited to explain “The Dress” to us in class!

Fun Fact: There are many families with Lynch Syndrome in this region, and Dr. Henry Lynch even trained at a local hospital!

Best memory of first year: Making the video for the 2nd years when they were at the NSGC conference!

Best memory of first year: We all made it through our statistics class! Woohoo!

Fun Fact: CHEO is home to Care for Rare and FORGE Canada, the most successful rare gene discovery programs in Canada!

You can find our video on the GCP blog, along with other great posts from the 2014-2015 school year! (http://ucgeneticcounseling.blogspot.ca/)
Class of 2017—Welcome to the Family!

From: Milford, NJ

**Bachelor’s Degree:**
University of Delaware, 2015—B.A. in Biological Sciences with a minor in Psychology.

**Experiences:**
Crisis hotline volunteer, hospital and police accompaniments, virology research assistant, genetic counseling internship.

**Free time:**
Hiking, practicing yoga, reading, spending time with her goldendoodle and mini dachshund, and traveling.

Kailyn Anderson

From: Baltimore, MD

**Bachelor’s Degree:**
Ursinus College, 2008—B.A. in English and Creative Writing.

**Experiences:**
Proofreader, administrative assistant, veterinary nurse, genetic counseling assistant.

**Free time:**
Running with her dog, cooking weird vegan recipes, and watching Netflix.

Hallie Andrew

From: Georgetown, KY

**Bachelor’s Degree:**
Eastern Kentucky University, 2014—B.S. in Biology with a minor in Chemistry.

**Experiences:**
Alpha Omicron Pi—VP of Academic Development, genetic research assistant, Northwestern University’s genetic counseling summer internship program, research laboratory technician.

**Free time:**
Playing board games, spending time with family and friends, and watching her favorite reality television shows.

Sarah Caldwell

From: Naperville, IL

**Bachelor’s Degree:**
University of Dayton, 2013—B.S. in Biology with minors in Chemistry and Psychology.

**Experiences:**
Biology lab prep, Sustainability Club member, Beta Beta Beta member, tutor, Research Experience for Undergrads at University of Tennessee-Knoxville, medical advocacy to rape survivors, hospice volunteer.

**Free time:**
Reading about genetics, playing cribbage, watching hockey, playing with her dog and hedgehog, crocheting, and watching Netflix.

Sarah Collier
Class of 2017—Welcome to the Family!

From: Lewis Center, OH

Bachelor’s Degree: The Ohio State University, 2015—B.S. in Biology with a minor in Psychology.

Experiences: Little-league football coach, note taker, activity leader at a senior adult living home, on-call sexual assault helpline responder.

Free time: Spending time with family and friends, watching Game of Thrones, reading science fiction novels, and watching his favorite sports team (Go Bucks!)

Michael Gurtler

From: Buffalo Grove, IL and Long Beach, CA

Bachelor’s Degree: Lawrence University in Appleton, WI

Experiences: Volunteer with Wisconsin Lions Camp, high school science teacher, M.S. Science Education from California State University.

Free time: Practicing yoga, running, biking, belly dancing, snowboarding, surfing, and trying new things with friends and family.

Jamie Garman

From: Cincinnati, OH

Bachelor’s Degree: Auburn University, 2015—B.S. in Biomedical Sciences.

Experiences: Research assistant, crisis hotline operator, summer research fellow at CCHMC.

Free time: Running, cheering on the Auburn Tigers football team, reading, spending time with family and friends, and all things Harry Potter.

Alyxis Giordullo

From: Whittier, CA

Bachelor’s Degree: University of California, Santa Barbara, 2013—B.S. in Biology.

Experiences: Genetic laboratory assistant, crisis line volunteer, employee at Integrated Genetics.

Free time: Cooking, sleeping, cute animals, spending time outdoors having adventures with her boyfriend, DJ.

Alana Kongkriangkai

From: Buffalo Grove, IL and Long Beach, CA

Bachelor’s Degree: Lawrence University in Appleton, WI

Experiences: Volunteer with Wisconsin Lions Camp, high school science teacher, M.S. Science Education from California State University.

Free time: Practicing yoga, running, biking, belly dancing, snowboarding, surfing, and trying new things with friends and family.

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Free time: Cooking, sleeping, cute animals, spending time outdoors having adventures with her boyfriend, DJ.
Class of 2017—Welcome to the Family!

**From:**
Libertyville, IL

**Bachelor's Degree:**
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014—B.S. in Molecular and Cellular Biology.

**Experiences:**
Cancer research laboratory assistant, volunteer at an emergency childcare facility, volunteer running free health screenings for underserved community members.

**Free time:**
Playing the flute, making and trying new foods, skiing, and watching Netflix.

**Margret Matias**

**From:**
Cleveland, OH

**Bachelor's Degree:**
The Ohio State University, 2013—B.S. in Psychology.

**Experiences:**
Volunteer with local high schools, Phi Sigma Pi, Teach for America, volunteer program coordinator with the Arc of Greater Cleveland, research assistant.

**Free time:**
Swimming, biking, watching Netflix, and playing Minecraft on her computer.

**Jessica Shank**

**From:**
Japan... but also Singapore, Malaysia, England, California

**Bachelor's Degree:**
UC Berkeley—B.A. in Molecular and Cell Biology with an emphasis in Genetics, Genomics and Development.

**Experiences:**
Resident Assistant, mammography clinic intern, post-abortion talk-line counselor, physical therapy assistant.

**Free time:**
Cooking, trying out new food, exploring local cafés and bars with friends, and taking walks.

**Ayaka Suzuki**

**From:**
Grand Blanc, MI

**Bachelor's Degree:**
University of Minnesota, 2015—B.S. in Genetics, Cell Biology, and Development with a minor in Psychology.

**Experiences:**

**Free time:**
Reading, watching college and NFL football (go Packers!), and spending time with friends and family.

**Meghan Tipsword**
Alumni Spotlight: Natalie Jansen Street, Class of 2004

Natalie Jansen Street’s entire career as a genetic counselor has been at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a Health Scientist with the Rare Disorders and Health Outcomes team. The team funds public health activities including surveillance of muscular dystrophies, clinical registries for spina bifida and fragile X syndrome, and clinical care guidelines for muscular dystrophies. The work sometimes involves participating in grantee meetings and advocacy group conferences. Natalie credits her thesis work at UC for teaching her to develop a research study and carry a project through to publication. Her study of quality of life in females who are heterozygous for Fabry disease was published not long after she graduated (Street N, Yi MS, Bailey LA, Hopkin RJ. See comment in PubMed Commons below Genetics in Medicine 2006. 6:346).

Natalie, her husband, Tom, and their 15 month old son Benjamin enjoy many outdoor activities, including camping and hiking at national parks; this summer their destination was Mt. Lassen Volcanic National Park in California. They love living in their newly renovated home in Atlanta, going to local farmers markets, and running on the numerous trails near their home in Candler Park. Reflecting on her two years in the UCGCP, Natalie recalls Cincinnati’s hills and distinctive neighborhoods, but her fondest memories are of good times with fellow students. Their travel to the 2003 NSGC conference in Charlotte was exciting and important but done on students’ budgets. Natalie has therefore been a generous contributor to the Huether Endowment fund and sees this as a way of “giving back” to the Program and recognizing its role in her career success. Natalie welcomes contact from alumni and others interested in learning more about the Rare Disorders and Health Outcome Team’s activities (ntl2@cdc.gov).

Teaching Psychosocial Genetic Counseling

As many alumni will remember, since the program’s beginning students have learned beginning psychosocial skills in the Counseling Techniques class taught by Dr. Geoff Yager. For a variety of reasons, it became necessary to revise our curriculum in the last year and incorporate the teaching of these skills in a different way. Therefore, the Introduction to Psychosocial Genetic Counseling course that all first years take in second semester was completely revised by instructors Katie Wusik and Carrie Atzinger in collaboration with Dr. Yager. The goal was to keep what was great about the Counseling Techniques class while allowing for incorporation of additional elements traditionally taught in spring Introduction to Genetic Counseling. The new course was taught for the first time in Spring Semester 2015.

The class meets twice a week with one day a week devoted to didactic instruction and one day a week devoted to role play practice. Dr. Yager continues to provide his immense expertise through teaching a large number of the lectures including those on Empathy, Confrontation, and Counseling Theories. Other lectures are given by Katie, Carrie, and additional guest speakers. The role play days allow students to work in groups to get peer and instructor feedback as they practice their newly learned counseling skills. The response to the course from students has been overwhelmingly positive particularly about the benefits of the frequent role play practice. A typical student response to the course was “This course really emphasized the importance of psychosocial counseling skills during a genetic counseling session. The weekly role plays were GREAT. When I actually began implementing psychosocial counseling into a session, I felt at ease with the various techniques.” We are excited to teach this new course again next year.
The Genetic Counseling Program (GCP) at the University of Cincinnati is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC). The program was founded in 1982. The GCP is a dual institution program that has affiliations with the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center and the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. The program trains students to be professional, patient-centered, and empathetic counselors who can fulfill the ever expanding roles of our field.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about genetic counseling, please visit:
   Website: www.geneticcounseling4u.org
   Facebook page: www.facebook.com/UCgeneticcounseling
   Student Blog: ucgeneticcounseling.blogspot.com

The Genetic Counseling Connection - Summer 2015 Edition, Edited by: Leandra Tolusso

**Update on Huether Endowment Fund**

The Alumni Relations Committee has sent a fundraising request. Please consider giving to the Huether Endowment, a worthy effort which exclusively supports graduate students’ needs such as education travel expenses. There is no better time to donate to The Huether Endowment than during the current 3 to 1 match. Ensure that your gift is optimized by giving now. Twenty-five dollar grows to one hundred dollars with this match.

Below is Caitlin Reinert’s testimonial about receiving funds to attend the 2014 NSGC Annual Education Conference, and you can learn more by visiting [http://www.geneticcounseling4u.org/noteworthy_activities/news.html](http://www.geneticcounseling4u.org/noteworthy_activities/news.html).

As graduate students, we have many expenses; the funds we received from the Huether Endowment made travel to the 2014 Annual Education Conference much less burdensome. By attending the AEC, my classmates and I were able to hear about the latest developments in the field, network with other genetic counselors, and enjoy exploring New Orleans together. I am grateful to the Huether Endowment for making these experiences possible!

*Caitlin Reinert, Class of 2015*

**UC/CCHMC GCP Online CEU Courses**

The UC/CCHMC GCP continues to offer online courses for continuing education for genetic counselors. Alumni who have taken these courses for credit in the program can retake them for CEUs after 5 years.

Information on how to sign up for these classes can be found on our website www.geneticcounseling4u.org.

Our current offerings are:
- Clinical Embryology (2.55 CEUs)
- Teratology (2.0 CEUs)
- Laboratory Genetic Counseling (1.13 CEUs)
- Neurogenetics (1.1 CEUs)
- Cardiovascular Genetics (1.0 CEU)

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