

### *The Chairperson's Message*

Counselor Education is at a crossroads as it enters a new era of outcomes measurements. Programs in Counselor Education face the scrutiny of multiple national accrediting bodies and state level organizations like Department of Education, and meeting the myriad of requirements may be challenging and difficult. Our department faculty is working diligently to face these challenges. We are taking a close look at our programs to ensure that necessary changes to the curriculum, program structure, course delivery and resource allocation are fulfilling the needs of our students yet remain in compliance with the following accreditation agencies: CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs), CORE (Council on Rehabilitation Education), NCATE (National Council Accreditation of Teacher Education), SACs (Southern Association of Colleges), and Florida Department of Education (FL DOE) Standards. In order to maintain our accreditation with each of these agencies we must adhere to specific guidelines known as standards. Each accreditation agency has its own set of standards.

This issue of the department's newsletter and future editions highlights examples of faculty and student accomplishments and current progress in the programs. We continue our steady climb as we prepare you for the counseling profession. Have a great holiday season and good luck in your course work. ●

Go Owls!

**Irene H. Johnson**, Department Chair/ Professor

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## LIVETEXT

The College of Education requires students to purchase the LiveText electronic student performance assessment software. LiveText allows students and faculty to assess program standards and provide evidence of your mastery of competencies as you progress through your program of study, track your performance, and comply with program approval and accreditation. Each student is provided with an electronic storage space to manage your external files in one location. Students can easily prepare multiple, customized electronic portfolio to share with their peers, faculty, and prospective employers. Students may purchase an account directly through [www.livetext.com](http://www.livetext.com), at any FAU campus bookstore, or for those students using financial aid funds to purchase textbooks can log onto [www.shopfau.com](http://www.shopfau.com). Additional information regarding the College of Education LiveText requirement go to <http://coe.fau.edu/livetext/> Account subscriptions are valid for a five year period and transferable to other instructions. Training and support is available through the LiveText customer support online at [www.livetext.com](http://www.livetext.com) and by phone 866-548-3839. ●

# Department of Counselor Education Program News

## Rehabilitation Counseling Program News

*By Dr. Michael Frain*

The Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) accredited program at Florida Atlantic University is enjoying its largest class of rehabilitation counseling masters students in 2011. The students continue to do very well on the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam. Since the inception of the CRC as a comprehensive exam and degree requirement, FAU students and graduates have passed the exam the first time at a rate of 95%. In 2010-11, twelve students took that exam for the first time and all twelve passed on their first attempt (the national pass rate was 68%).

Our students have submitted proposals for the first time to present at the National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE) Spring conference in San Francisco and look forward to meeting other student attendees. Graduates and students involved in internship have been well received by the Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) programs in Florida, with nearly 30% of recent graduates finding permanent employment with the Veterans Administration.

Three students have been involved in three different recent publications. Mike Rolland co-authored a chapter on veterans in the book *New Directions in Rehabilitation Counseling*; Frank Wijngaarde co-authored a journal submission to Rehabilitation Education entitled "Training needs of certified rehabilitation counselors in order to work effectively with veterans with disabilities"; and Michele Fazzari co-authored a manuscript detailing economic indicators effect on disability employment. Additionally, the program has its first (although surely not last) reality television star in Michael Ross, CRC, who was featured as a rehabilitation counselor in the MTV hit series *True Life* "addicted to exercise" November 6, 2011.

This Fall the program welcomed Deenaz Patel as a visiting line professor, Ms. Patel has been warmly received by all here at FAU and we hope she is enjoying the beach lifestyle of Boca Raton. The program is starting a category R degree program for Florida rehabilitation counselors who have not attained their CRC to date. The program should be available in the Spring 2012 semester. ♦



# Student Awards and Achievements

By Drs. Elizabeth Villares and Greg Brigman

Congratulations to the following students for their awards and achievements this semester. Dr. Ana Leon, co-authored an article with several FAU professors based on her dissertation research. The 2011 article titled, Closing the Achievement Gap of Hispanic Students: A School Counseling Response was published in the Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation journal and was selected as the 2011 Association for Assessment in Counseling and Evaluation, Outstanding Outcome Research Article of the Year 2010-2011. Drs. Leon, Villares, Brigman, Webb, and Peluso received the award that the 2011 Association for Assessment in Counseling and Evaluation Annual Conference this past September. The article has now been nominated for the American Counseling Association Outcome Research Article of the Year which will be announced during the annual conference in March 2012.

On November 18, 2011, Deanna Schneider, a masters level student in the School Counseling Program, was nominated for the 2011 Owl Awards Graduate Assistant of the Year. Deanna among the top three finalist of the award which was presented by the Graduate Student Association at Marleen and Harold Forkas Alumni center on the Boca Raton campus. The annual event recognizes the outstanding graduate students within the at FAU community. ●

## Recently Defended Dissertations

### Summer 2011

#### **THE EFFECT OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STUDENT SUCCESS SKILLS ON PRO-SOCIAL AND BULLYING BEHAVIOR**

By Melissa Mariani, Ph.D.,  
Dissertation Chair - Dr. Linda Webb  
Committee Members - Drs. G. Brigman & E. Villares

#### **THE RELATIONSHIP OF SELF TRANSCENDENCE, SOCIAL INTEREST, AND SPIRITUALITY TO WELL-BEING IN HIV/AIDS ADULTS**

By John Sperry, Ph.D., LCSW, LMHC  
Dissertation Chair - Dr. Paul Peluso  
Committee Members - Drs. Michael Frain and Patricia Liehr

### Fall 2011

#### **THE EFFECTS OF A CULTURALLY TRANSLATED SCHOOL COUNSELOR-LED INTERVENTION ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF HAITIAN FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS**

By Velouse Jean-Jacques, Doctoral Candidate, M.Ed.  
Dissertation Chair - Dr. Greg Brigman  
Committee Members - Drs. E. Villares, L. Webb, and P. Peluso

#### **THE EFFECTS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE CULTURAL SPANISH TRANSLATION OF THE STUDENT SUCCESS SKILLS PROGRAM ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

By Ivett Urbina, Doctoral Candidate, M.Ed.  
Dissertation Chair - Dr. Greg Brigman  
Committee Members - Drs. E. Villares, L. Webb, and P. Peluso



# 2011 Florida School Counselor Association Annual Convention

*By Randi Schietz & Elizabeth Villares*

The Department of Counselor Education was represented well at the Florida School Counselor Association (FSCA) Convention held in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. FSCA hosts this annual convention, which attracts school counselors from all over the state to share best practices, network with other professional school counselors, district leaders, and to learn more about current research trends. For many of the FAU students this convention serves as their first opportunity to meet with other professional school counselors and engage in professional development. Over 20 students at the masters, Ed.S., and Ph.D. levels were in attendance. FAU students and professors were also presenters and award recipients. Presentations included the following:

## **Fidelity Matters: Implementing Interventions as Designed & Impacting Student Achievement with Evidence-Based Curriculum**

*- Drs. Elizabeth Villares & Linda Webb*

## **A School-wide Program to Change School Climate: Passport to Peace**

*- Dr. Ana Maria Leon, Alumni*

## **Effect of Student Success Skills on Pro-Social and Bullying Behavior**

*- Dr. Melissa Mariani, Alumni*

## **The Counselor/Principal Relationship & Transition to Middle School - Roll Out the Red Carpet**

*- Janell Leatherman, Doctoral student*

## **School Counselor Identity and Advocacy in Trying Economic Times**

*- Randi Schietz and Melissa Renda, Doctoral students and representatives of the PBSCA*

The School Counseling faculty also hosted a Brown Bag Luncheon with Advisory Board members. This informal meeting was a opportunity to share program highlights, grant awards and research activities, and discuss programmatic changes. Members attending the Brown Bag Luncheon completed a survey regarding ways members feel they are best skilled to support the School Counseling program's continuous improvement efforts and best practices for training school counselors. Additionally, the Advisory Board and faculty shared ideas on how to collaborate to improve and address the Marzano's evaluation system for teachers in the state and how the Marzano model is impacting professional school counselors at the district level. We want to thank all Advisory Board members who joined the Luncheon and look forward to our next meeting in May 2012. ●



Pictured above (Left to Right): Melissa Renda, Elizabeth Villares, and Randi Schietz



Pictured above (Left to Right): Melissa Mariani, Linda Webb, and Cliff Mack



Pictured above (Left to Right): Deanna Schneider, Nicole Martinez, and Stephan Kaplan

# A Journey to a Ph.D. in Counseling: A Doctoral Student's Perspective

*By Randi Schietz*

*“We choose to go...not because [it is] easy, but because [it is] hard, because the goal will serve to measure and organize the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win.” - John Fitzgerald Kennedy*

In just a few weeks, my cohort and I can look back and declare that we have officially completed our first semester of the doctoral program at FAU. Of course, this is only the beginning of our journey of classes, literature reviews, proposals, research, and an abundance of writing over the next few years. So has it been worth it? Is it what we expected? Would we recommend the journey to others? Why did we take on this challenge? Well, I can give you some of my thoughts of what this journey has been like for me and what adjustments I have had to make along the way in case you are considering this journey one day.

## **My Professional Journey**

I have spent the last 18 years working as an elementary school counselor for the School District of Palm Beach County. Even though my first Specialist in Education degree was in School Psychology I somehow ended up as a school counselor and have never regretted the choice. I became so passionate about the field of school counseling I started presenting at conferences and at our county staff development trainings for school counselors. Eventually, I became President of the Palm Beach School Counselor Association (PBSCA) and created the first PBSCA newsletter which I have edited for the past five years. I suppose I could have stopped there and certainly my aversion and distress related to my previous students loans have kept me from going further with my education for decades. Then I heard about the program at FAU and the financial incentives like assistantships and fellowships that have made that returning to school a possibility. So, my feeling is when an opportunity presents itself, sometimes you just have to take a leap and go for it!

## **Challenges and Support**

Has life been challenging making this adjustment to become a full time student? Well, being a widow with two sons in middle school and working full time, I am not sure you could call any part of my life “unchallenging” so why would I have added more challenges? Well, I was happy to find out that most of the people in my cohort work full time and have to balance work and family responsibilities so I was not alone. Also, there are only six of us in the cohort and we have developed a very strong and supportive bond with each other. From what I have been discovering, most of the other cohorts describe the same closeness with their peers. I have also encountered many supportive and encouraging faculty members. Seeing the end in sight, understanding the process along the way and understanding who to turn when to when you have questions or anxieties is also important.

I have not been a full time student since 1994. In those days, I was lucky to have an old Apple computer that pretty much did nothing other than type my papers so saying that things have changed in university life would be an understatement! There has been a great deal to get use to again (writing in APA style, organizing an ever changing schedule, and spending my weekends doing homework, etc.) but it has gotten easier with time.

I know we are all happy to say that the semester is ending but I think aside from an eagerly anticipated vacation, we are proud of our accomplishments and look forward to entering our second semester with a little more clarity and self-efficacy...and so our journey continues. Pictured below (Left to Right) the Fall 2011 Cohort class: Cliff Mack, Jenny Chien, Beth Ashton, Hovi Shroff, Randi Schietz, and Melissa Renda. ●







# BETA RHO CHI

*A Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota*

*Counseling Academic & Professional Honor Society International*

## *Message from the Beta Rho Chi Chapter President*

Hello to all current and potential Beta Rho Chi (BRC) chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (CSI). I would like to re-introduce myself and my fellow enthusiastic executive board members. My name is Luna Medina and I am currently holding the president position of the chapter. Alongside with me is the treasurer Kayleigh Kelley, and secretary Patricia Diaz. The rest of the executive board members include Anthony Foster, Catherine Bilotti (chairperson of the Fundraising committee), and Jessica Jarman (chairperson of the membership committee).

Our chapter was re-established last summer and includes 26 active members. We are about to initiate about a dozen more on December 2, 2011. During this past year we met on a monthly basis, heard some great speakers and began to get to know each other. Our Professional Development and Leadership committee along with the Counselor Education department organized a great workshop about bullying by Dr. Nicoll in September, and the Fundraising committee arranged a Halloween bake sale in October. Pictured on the right are Cathy Bilotti and Carrie Convers.



The mission of CSI is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership, advocacy, and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling. For me, one of the most exciting things is networking with people who share my interests in counseling. You can become active through CSI, or within our chapter. Creating change can also be as easy as telling others about CSI.

Continuing to give just a taste of what's to come in the spring semester, every committee is responsible for creating one event (how exciting!!). We are expected to host few great presenters like Dr. David Reamer speaking about "Presenting Scholarly Work", and Fernando Schutt, LMHC speaking about "Myth and Legends about Psychoanalysis at the Contemporary World."

To make this happen we will need our members to be committed to the chapter, and to its purpose. We are going in the right direction due to the strong involvement of the executive board and few troopers who volunteered to help. We appreciate those of you who took the time to help promote and support our chapter! Being a student, a parent, working full time are all hard to juggle together, but as counselors we are here to make a difference, and that difference can start TODAY! For those of you, who are still not part of BRC, please join us!

Let me end with a quote I like: *"When you do nothing, you feel overwhelmed and powerless. But when you get involved, you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better."* - Pauline R. Kezer ♦

Luna Medina  
Beta Rho Chi President



# Beta Rho Chi Member Perspectives

## Becoming a Member of Beta Rho Chi

*By Patricia Diaz, Secretary*



Beta Rho Chi (Florida Atlantic University’s chapter of Chi Sigma Iota International Honor Society) is a society worth joining. The chapter has been gaining attention in the Department of Counselor Education and its membership is quickly growing. The current membership exceeds 20 Counselor Education students, and 12 new initiates are expected at the chapter’s next initiation this December. One has to wonder, how has Beta Rho Chi been able to thrive this quickly?

To answer this question, one must simply ask its members. When I asked Layven Reguero, Chair of the Newsletter Committee, about why he enjoys being part of the organization he replied, “I was really interested in learning more about professional development and career options. Joining Beta Rho Chi is a good way to access information about the profession. Also, I really like talking to people who are truly excited about the field of counseling”.

This is a sentiment that is shared by many of the students involved in Beta Rho Chi. However, it is essential that the chapter continues to initiate new members in order for it to grow and become a permanent fixture in the Department of Counselor Education at FAU. Interested students are encouraged to attend chapter meetings and events in order to express their interest to the chapter.

Membership is by invitation. Before an invitation is extended students must meet the following criteria. Eligible students must: (a) maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher, (b) have completed one full time semester (9 credits) of graduate coursework, (c) hold degree-seeking status, and most importantly (d) be considered positive and ethical representatives of the counseling field by their peers. For more information on membership criteria interested students should visit the Chi Sigma Iota website available at <http://www.csi.net.org/> ●

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## The “Not-So-Bad” and then the Good News

*By Rob Freund, CSI Beta Rho Chi Member*



Starting up a new organization is never easy. It requires a lot of time, effort, and commitment. Often, the potential good to be gained from an organization is proportional to the amount of work necessary to be invested. Now, you may be thinking, “this starting a club is a lot of work” tack is not exactly that sell I was hoping to read. Nevertheless, it’s true; bringing an organization back from the grave, was made possible this past year with FAU’s Chi Sigma Iota chapter. It has consumed many volunteer hours, effort, and commitment on the part of all the active members. An equal amount of effort will likely be necessary to maintain the pace of accomplishment our chapter established this past year. However, as my grandmother often says, “many hands makes light work”. When all members collaborate and share the load, the work becomes more manageable; almost minimal.

That’s the not-so-bad news - it takes work. So, hear’s the good. For all the work needed to keep this newly revived chapter afloat, the benefits far exceed the effort. FAU’s Counselor Education program is magnificent; we have some of the best professors, excellent accreditation, and balanced, sound training. Students in the program will tell you how much they love their classes, their professors, and their future career field. Counseling is a career of passions, and you see that reflected in everything the program engages in. Our professors want to connect with us, as we the students, connect with the material and our peers. Chi Sigma Iota represents opportunities for doing just that - to get involved in the field of counseling on a deeper level. Meetings revolve around the issues of today, and urge members to develop a profound professional counselor identity. Guest speakers share personal experiences, life-lessons learned during their time in the field of counseling. Workshops are regularly held to provide education and training regarding the latest trends and topics of interest, not to mention other professional development activities.

Chi Sigma Iota also provides an invaluable opportunity to grow the counseling community within the department. Given that the majority of our classes are offered during the evening and weekends, there are not many opportunities to connect with peers in a social context. Within the organization students are able to be part of a community, and develop a sense of belonging among their peers. The more connected a person can feel to their field, the more likely they are to take ownership of their education. Plus, let’s be honest, the counseling field is full of some pretty spectacular and interesting people. Sometimes it’s nice just to make some new friends!

I would urge you to join Chi Sigma Iota when given the chance. I personally guarantee that it will broaden your perspective of the counseling field and present you with many terrific experiences. Any amount of time put into the organization is truly an investment that will bear fruit well after your time at FAU is over. ●



# **Beta Rho Chi, Chapter Newsletter Editor's Notes**

*By Layven Reguero*

There are so many positive stories surrounding our chapter of CSI, its members, alumni, and supporting professors that could be shared, and ought to be shared - but alas, there is limited space in this newsletter. I received many emails from students highlighted many of our chapter's recent and exciting accomplishments. Luna discussed many of these inspirational stories in the President's Message, but I would like to draw your attention to another example - one of the many success stories you might hear when socializing with students and colleagues at our CSI Chapter meetings:

Dr. Melissa Mariani has been honored as the 2011 Florida School Counselor of Year Award in the Pre-K to 8th grade category. Dr. Mariani, an active chapter alumni, was nominated for the award by Dr. Serena Brasco, Principal at St. Juliana Catholic School, in West Palm Beach, FL. The nomination was formally supported by FAU professors Linda Webb and Elizabeth Villares, as well as her school's pastor, and the Assistant Superintendent at the Diocese of Palm Beach.



Dr. Mariani was awarded for her outstanding work in running a comprehensive school counseling program that focuses on the needs of students and how they can benefit from the work of school counselors. Please join me in congratulating her achievement!

Thank you to all who have contributions to the Beta Rho Chi chapter! Many efforts happen "behind the scenes", but I can personally attest to the fact that they are evident in the enriching environment of our chapter's endeavors. ●

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## **Beta Rho Chi - Contact Information**

CSI Beta Rho Chi website - <http://beta-rho-chi.csi-chapters.org/>

President - Luna, L. Medina ([lmedina6@fau.edu](mailto:lmedina6@fau.edu))

Secretary - Patricia Diaz ([pdiaz8@fau.edu](mailto:pdiaz8@fau.edu))

Treasurer - Kayleigh Kelley ([kkelley6@fau.edu](mailto:kkelley6@fau.edu))

Faculty Advisor - Dr. Jungeun Lee ([jlee106@fau.edu](mailto:jlee106@fau.edu))

Faculty Co-Advisor - Dr. Elizabeth Villares ([evillare@fau.edu](mailto:evillare@fau.edu))

Membership Chair - Jessica Jarman ([jessicamariejarman@gmail.com](mailto:jessicamariejarman@gmail.com))





# Department Announcements and Opportunities

## WHEN SHOULD YOU APPLY?

DEGREE PROGRAM	APPLICATION DEADLINE	CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS	NOTIFICATION BEGINS
M.Ed. & Ed.S.	September 15 - For Spring Applicants	Second week in October	November 1
	March 1 - For Fall Applicants	First week in April	April 5
Ph.D.	January - For Fall Admission Only	February 15	March 1

Only completed applications will be considered. A completed application consists of the FAU Graduate School application, official undergraduate and graduate transcripts, GRE scores (taken within the past five years), a personal goal statement, resume and/or essay including volunteer experience related to counseling, and three letters of reference of a professional native, e.g. former professors, employers, colleagues who have direct insight on your academic abilities and professional goals. Visit <http://www.fau.edu/graduate/apply.php> to get started. ●

## Congratulations to our Fall 2011 Graduates!

### Ph.D. in Counseling

Velouse Jean-Jacques and Ivett Urbrina

### M.Ed. in Mental Health Counseling

Elizabeth Johnson-Gutierrez,  
Linda Miller, and Claudia Rodrigues

### M.Ed. in Rehabilitation Counseling

Jeffrey Siegel, Mike Rolland, and  
Frank Wijngarrde

### Ed.S. in School Counseling

Nicole Martinez, Lourdes Millares, and  
Yolanda Steiert

### M.Ed. in School Counseling

Cheryl Allen, Patricia Germain, and  
Daryl Savran



The FAU Department of Counselor Education publishes this electronic newsletter. The newsletter is designed to provide information on our degree programs, student and faculty accomplishments, along with scholarship, teaching, and service opportunities.

Mailing Address:  
Florida Atlantic University  
College of Education  
Department of Counselor Education  
777 Glades Road, Building 47, Room 270  
Boca Raton, 33431

Phone: (561)-297-3602  
Fax: (561)-297-2309  
E-mail: [cnslred@fau.edu](mailto:cnslred@fau.edu)  
Website: <http://www.coe.fau.edu/academicdepartments/ce/default.aspx>

Contributors: Drs. Greg Brigman, Michael Frain, Irene Johnson, and Elizabeth Villares. Graduate Students: Patricia Diaz, Rob Freund, Luna Medina, Layven Regueto, and Randi Schietz.

Designed and Edited by Dr. Elizabeth Villares  
Assistant Editor: Randi Schietz

## FAU Department of Counselor Education Faculty Members

### Irene H. Johnson, Ph.D.

Professor / Boca  
Department Chair  
Phone: 561-297-2136  
E-mail: [ijohnso9@fau.edu](mailto:ijohnso9@fau.edu)

### Greg A. Brigman, Ph.D.

Professor / Boca  
School Counseling  
Phone: 561-297-3616  
E-mail: [gbrigman@fau.edu](mailto:gbrigman@fau.edu)

### Michael Frain, Ph.D.

Associate Professor / Boca  
Rehabilitation Counseling  
Phone: 561-297-3626  
E-mail: [mfrain@fau.edu](mailto:mfrain@fau.edu)

### Jungeun Lee, Ph.D.

Visiting Asst. Professor / Boca  
Mental Health Counseling  
Phone: 561-297-2165  
E-mail: [jlee106@fau.edu](mailto:jlee106@fau.edu)

### William G. Nicoll, Ph.D.

Professor / Treasure Coast  
Mental Health Counseling  
Phone: 772-873-3349  
E-mail: [nicoll@fau.edu](mailto:nicoll@fau.edu)

### Deenaz Patel, MSW

Visiting Instructor / Boca  
Rehabilitation Counseling  
Phone: 561-297-2806  
E-mail: [deenaz123@gmail.com](mailto:deenaz123@gmail.com)

### Paul R. Peluso, Ph.D.

Associate Professor / Boca  
Mental Health Counseling  
Phone: 561-297-3625  
E-mail: [ppeluso@fau.edu](mailto:ppeluso@fau.edu)

### Len Sperry, M.D., Ph.D.

Professor / Boca  
Mental Health Counseling  
Phone: 561-297-3507  
E-mail: [lsperry@fau.edu](mailto:lsperry@fau.edu)

### Elizabeth Villares, Ph.D.

Associate Professor / Jupiter  
School Counseling  
Phone: 561-799-8628  
E-mail: [evillare@fau.edu](mailto:evillare@fau.edu)

### Linda Webb, Ph.D.

Associate Professor / Davie  
School Counseling  
Phone: 954-236-1074  
E-mail: [lwebb@fau.edu](mailto:lwebb@fau.edu)

