



Chi Sigma Iota Monthly Newsletter

Xi Chapter - April 2022

President Message

Kelli Carlson, Chapter Xi President

Hello!

As we end the semester, I want to reflect on the past school year. Although we may have adjusted and adapted from COVID, the after-effects are still coming to light. Starting practicum, and working with clients who have been greatly impacted by the pandemic, shows us that mental health professionals are needed now more than ever. As students who are coming into the profession during the pandemic, we have been pushed in ways that have caused us to question our purpose, our strength, and our ability to help others. We may feel guilt for not spending more time with family and friends, and we may feel anger with how our mental healthcare system works. All of these feelings are valid, and sometimes we need to just acknowledge how that puts pressure on us. Sometimes we can get caught up in meeting course requirements, counting hours, and doing paperwork without taking a step back and realizing the importance of our profession.

In my last session with my personal counselor, she had to remind me that the work we do is important. The work we do goes beyond just the client – our position affects the community as a whole. Our purpose asks us to think outside of ourselves and our own issues to help others heal, therefore healing our community, and ultimately, our society. Sometimes we can get caught up in the feelings of not being enough and not being capable to do everything we *want* to do or *should* do in our personal lives because of our schooling/work. You are enough. You are capable. You have time to do what you want to do. This is a reminder to CELEBRATE small achievements, be proud of how you got here, and give yourself some slack for doing the best you can.

I'm incredibly proud of everyone for making it through this year, and I can't wait to see what the next school year brings!

HAGS,
Kelli

Graduating Members

Lindsay Chandler:

Lindsay has been in the program since 2016 and is graduating this May! Lindsay says, "While in the program I learned so much about myself as a person and as an educator. Now I'm moving to Peoria with my husband to begin my career as a school counselor. I will miss everyone from the program and am so grateful for the connections I have made at WIU's CNED program." Lindsay will be working next year at the Illinois Valley Central district as a Kindergarten-8th Grade counselor.

Vicki Hall:

Vicki is looking forward to spending time on weekends with my family and being free of homework. She states, "I am

considering finishing my second master's degree at Wartburg Theological Seminary which I deferred so that I could take on this counseling program. I am looking forward to what the future holds and am open to the many possibilities! I have enjoyed all of my classes, even the classes that I was sure I would not like or be good at! Some of my favorite memories of my time here at WIU were the study/homework sessions that a group of us held regularly at Starbucks before the pandemic began. That location on Middle Road in Bettendorf will always be known as 'Studybucks' to me because of all those long study sessions!"

Elyse Kress:

After graduation, Elyse plans to work as a school counselor at Muscatine High School. She says "I love working with all students but High Schoolers will always be some of my favorite humans in this world! I also plan to take the NCE in April and work towards my full clinical licensure. The path to graduation is not an easy one but I am so excited for all of the students being initiated into CSI tonight. You are all going to rock the Counseling Profession! Congratulations."

Katie Krone

Katie is currently interning at the Robert Young Center and working as a GA for the department. She says, "I plan to (hopefully) be hired at RYC and work toward getting my LCPC and further learning about my areas of interests such as chronic pain and mental health, suicidology, and trauma-informed care. I will always remember the relationships I've been able to form with my professors and my fellow students."

Ami Leichsenring

Welcome to all new CSI members and to graduating members, we finally did it! Ami is in the school counseling track and is looking forward to graduation in May. She says, "During the program I learned so much and valued all of my internship experiences. After graduation I plan to stay in the Quad Cities and am currently searching for positions."

Mary Moore

Mary has spent the last four years immersed in the CNED program at WIU and is so grateful for her time here. She says, "the growth that I have seen personally and professionally is significant and I know I am a better person, parent, and counselor because of the experiences I have had. As I look toward graduation, I am excited to dive fully into my career as a School Counselor, and will be starting my second year in that role at Blue Grass Elementary in the fall. I am also looking forward to having more time to dedicate to my two little boys. I can't wait to see what this next chapter holds, but will really miss the people and opportunities from WIU."

Mary Naughton

Mary plans to remain at her current position as a Sexual Abuse therapist at Family Resources. She says, "I started this program in 2017 and a lot has changed in my life since then. School really has been one of the most constant things in my life over the last few years and though I am ready to be done, I will certainly miss my classes, our exemplary faculty and my classmates. I plan to pursue licensure after graduation. I hope to continue to learn and grow and I am excited to see what the future holds."

Crystal Nuci

After graduation, Crystal plans on taking the summer off to spend time with her family and travel. She plans on providing school-based therapy in the fall!

Tiffany Platz

Tiffany Platz was hired as an interim school counselor in the Kewanee School District in 2020. She plans to continue her employment as a school counselor in the Kewanee School District after she graduates, as it is the town where she lives. She also plans to become certified in clinical mental health and already had plans to continue classes at WIU, in the fall, for that. Tiffany says "the most memorable thing about the Counseling Program at WIU is the extremely caring and supportive staff and the friendships that I made during my time here. The people here are the best!"

Allison Whitcher

Allison will be at United Township High School next year. She says "I have loved being in this program and have learned so much about myself. The professors and my classmates have been amazing, and I have loved working with each of them. I was fortunate to spend my practicum and both internships at Cambridge School district and was able to learn from two amazing school counselors. I thought at the beginning of the program that I wanted elementary or junior high aged students, but I fell in love with high school counseling during my practicum."

Aundrea Watkins

Aundrea plans to go on vacation with her significant other after graduation. Professionally, she will continue working at her full-time job, American Industrial Door Company as the Project Manager Lead & HR Representative. She is considering taking additional classes so that she can not only be a School Counselor, but also a School-Based Therapist. She says, "I am very thankful and blessed to be walking in May with my amazing cohorts. Each classmate and professor has helped shape me into being the professional counselor I'm continuously striving to be. I regret nothing and am thankful for everything. Cheers everyone and I'll see you out in the field!"

Montana Mahaffey

Montana is moving back home to Champaign Urbana with her dog Minnie. She will work as a High School Counselor at Rantoul Township High School. However, she will still be coming to the Quad Cities to finish out her coaching contract as Davenport West High School's Color Guard Coach.

Other graduating members:

Heather Hutcherson

Taija Robinson

Bailee Shepherd

Gena Soedt

Congratulations to all graduating members of CSI! The best of luck to you on your journeys!

Election

Congratulations to our newly elected executive board for the 2022-2023 year! We are excited to see what ideas they have for bettering our chapter!

- President-Elect: Keyaira Belha
- Secretary: Brittany Pernel
- Treasurer-Elect: Barb Gentry

Committees

We will have positions for CSI members to participate in different committees dedicated to counseling education. These sub-committees foster opportunities for engaging with CSI members/peers, and discuss new ideas and events for our chapter! Please consider participating in them!

These committees include:

- Professional Development/Community Engagement
- Newsletter/Wellness
- Advocacy

Scavenger Hunt!

Join us during Manage Your Stress Week (Monday, May 2nd - Thursday, May 5th) for a scavenger hunt! A list of clues will be sent out the Friday before MYSW (April 29th). QR codes will be placed throughout the QCC Complex building during MYSW, and each find automatically enters you into a drawing for a prize! The more clues you find, the better chances of winning a raffle prize! We will pick winners at the end of the week, and we'll hand out the prizes during finals week. Keep your eyes peeled!

ACA - Counseling Awareness Month



The American Counseling Association (ACA) designates April of each year as Counseling Awareness Month (CAM), a time of advocacy for the profession and celebration of the outstanding efforts of counselors in myriad settings as they seek to facilitate the growth and development of all people.

The more than 53,000 members of the ACA take considerable pride in both their work and their accomplishments and seek to make the importance of counseling and the role of counselors better known throughout the nation and the world.

Counseling in the United States and the world is delivered via many human service settings and can be found in a variety of institutions. Statistics from the US Department of Labor indicate that more than 665,500 counselors work in agencies, schools, organizations, private practice, personal and health care delivery systems and other settings. These professionals work with people across the life span, from childhood through the senior years.

This year's theme—The Future is... Self-Care, Advocacy and Inclusion #BurnBrightNotOut—is focused on some of the avenues that will help ensure a brighter future for counselors, their clients and the counseling profession.

What's Been Happening?

- Initiation Ceremony: Welcome to all of our new CSI members who were inducted on March 31st! We look forward to your new ideas and participation over the next school year!

Upcoming CSI Meetings & Community Events

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event/Meeting</i>	<i>Description</i>
Month of April	Counselor Awareness Month	The ACA designates April as a time for advocacy and celebration of the counseling field. #BurnBrightNotOut
April 15- May 28	NCE Testing Window	Students registered for the NCE will complete their test during this window of time. Good luck!
May 2 - May 6	Manage Your Stress Week Scavenger Hunt	CSI and Counseling Association (CA) are planning a scavenger hunt! Find 10 QR codes and get entered into a drawing for up to \$25 in gift cards!
May 15	Graduation/ After-graduation banquet	Join CNED in celebrating our graduates in the Riverfront Atrium from 3-5pm after the graduation ceremony! Food and drinks will be provided.

Get Involved!

What is Chi Sigma Iota?

“CSI is an international honor society that values academic and professional excellence in counseling. We promote a strong professional identity through members (professional counselors, counselor educators, and students) who contribute to the realization of a healthy society by fostering wellness and human dignity” (Chi Sigma Iota, 2018).

Mission: Promoting Excellence in the Profession of Counseling

Our mission 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 (Chi Sigma Iota, 2018).

Benefits of Chi Sigma Iota

- Members of Western Illinois Universities XI Chapter of CSI empower students and advocate for change.
- Being apart of a supportive community
- Access to FREE professional development webinars
- Scholarship and award opportunities

How can I become a member?

- Students who have completed 12 credit hours of school counseling or mental health counseling and have shown academic excellence with a GPA of 3.5 are eligible to join Chi Sigma Iota.
- ANYONE interested in joining can come to our full chapter meetings.

Chi Sigma Iota. (2018). What is CSI? Retrieved from <https://www.csi-net.org/>

To learn more about benefits of becoming a member visit this link:

https://www.csi-net.org/page/Membership_Benefits
