Director’s Letter

Dear CWTAP Community,

With spring quarter here, we are gearing up for many CWTAP students graduating. This June, Eastern’s 3-year Spokane part-time MSW program will have 14 graduating CWTAP students, our full-time program will have 6 graduating students, and our inaugural BASW program will have 2 students graduating. We are starting a new cohort in Everett this summer, and it will be a robust group with many DCYF employees and non-employees joining. We are currently recruiting CWTAP BASW students as the program has expanded to include both juniors and seniors.

-Gerry Charvat, Interim Director & Faculty Field Advisor

Welcome Tom Schueler!

Tom has joined CWTAP as the Fiscal Analyst and is located in Cheney at Eastern Washington University. For the past few years they were working for a public accounting firm in Spokane, WA and obtained a master’s degree in professional accounting from EWU. Due to an interest in governmental accounting, Tom decided to join the CWTAP team at EWU in order to build a better understanding of governmental and grant accounting. Tom is excited to handle the finances of CWTAP and to help in the running and continuation of the grant.
The University of Washington CWTAP hosted the 25th Annual CWTAP Student Institute in Seattle, WA in February of 2024. This cherished event is the culmination of the collaborative efforts of the CWTAP programs at the University of Washington, University of Washington Tacoma, and Eastern Washington University. The goal of the Institute is to offer CWTAP students an opportunity to engage in learning, networking, and the exchange of knowledge and expertise among their peers and faculty members.

The 25th Annual CWTAP Student Institute centered around the overarching theme of “Collective Well-Being: Promoting Healing, Wellness, and Community in Child Welfare”. We had the pleasure of hearing from guest speakers Dr. Joel Odimba, the Director of Child Welfare Workforce Support, and Dr. Michael Spencer, the Dean of the University of Washington, School of Social Work. Their talks sparked engaging discussions on crucial topics such as racial diversity, preventive measures, and staff retention within DCYF.

The student presentations, which serve as the cornerstone of the Student Institute, addressed critical issues within child welfare. The students delivered their insights in captivating and thought-provoking ways.

(LTR) Students Abe Choate, Bryonna Henry, Jessyka Bastin, and FFI Danelle Stone

(LTR) Students Delaney Murphy, Alissa Copeland, Andrew Schmokel, David Hanson, Kendra Morphy, Riley Karpen, and Haley Sando.
Student Institute 2024

EWU Student Presenters:

Alissa Copeland
“Accessing Community-based Prevention Services for CPS Cases With Young Children to Meet the Requirements of HB1227”

April Smith and Hannah VanValkinburg
“We Can Do Prevention! The Early Learning Navigator Program”

Abe Choate
“FFPSA: Activating the Power of Family”

Riley Karpen
“Fatherhood and Parent Engagement at DCYF”

Veronica Peters and Oliva Hillyard
“Active Efforts and Insights From ICWA”

Elsy Cruz and Kelley Gubler
“Improving Access to Mental Health Treatment for Dependent Youth: The FFPSA Model and Requirements”

Maggie Lawson and Katie Moss
“Achieving Permanency for Children and Youth Receiving (BRS)”

Amy Baker and Michele Zeman
“Harms of Removal: What We Know and What We Can Do”

Bryonna Henry
“The Importance of Connections and Recruitment for Children and Youth in Foster Care”

Sidney Greenup and Payton Stueckle
“Fentanyl Crisis and the Impacts on Child Welfare”

Jessyka Bastin and Keila Diaz
“Early Childhood ‘Safe babies’ (LTR) Students Maria Smith and Lindy Gastineau (LTR) Students Alissa Copeland, Riley Karpen, and EWU Director of MSW Deb Svoboda”
2024 Graduating Students

Congratulations!

We wish to congratulate our graduating cohorts: Spokane Part-time 2021-2024, Cheney Full-time 2022-2024, and our BASW 2023-2024. We wish you all the best in your ventures in child welfare!

Also a big thank you to all the of Agency Field Instructors and Task Supervisors, you play an integral part in our students success! We couldn’t do this without you.

Graduates Seeking Employment

These graduates are not yet employed with DCYF. Below is the students’ names and each students’ ideal location. These students are required to search state-wide for employment once they graduate. Contact Gerry Charvat or Danelle Stone for student contact information.

Sidney G.- Bellingham, WA & Richland, WA, SSS3
Katie M.- Spokane, WA, SSS3
Nathan B.- Spokane, WA SSS1
Courtney O.- Spokane, WA SSS1
Payton Stueckle
Social Service Specialist 1, CFWS
Spokane North DCYF - Region 1

By Danelle Stone

Payton Stueckle is an EWU CWTAP student in her final quarter of the Cheney full-time MSW program. Payton discovered her heart of service working as a private in-home caregiver for older adults and persons with intellectual disabilities, work she started in her sophomore year of high school. Her initial career interests included nursing, which ultimately shifted due to her less than favorable gifts in math and science, so she decided to obtain her undergraduate degree in Communication Studies from Eastern Washington University in 2021. Payton was drawn to social work as a graduate studies program given the versatility of a MSW and her passion for supporting and advocating for those most vulnerable in her community. She learned of CWTAP after receiving her acceptance notice to EWU’s MSW program, and it ended up being the perfect fit.

Payton currently works full-time as a Social Service Specialist 1 (SSS1), supporting case-carrying staff and independently managing case-related activities for the Spokane North DCYF office. In this position, Payton has continued learning how to be an effective child welfare social worker and advocate through her direct experience working with diverse families. She is challenged to identify each client’s unique strengths and supporting access to resources that address their complex needs. Payton finds great meaning in this work, particularly client self-actualization, and makes sure to celebrate the “little wins.”

Payton’s participation in CWTAP has provided her with invaluable knowledge regarding on-the-job insights, direct practice partnering with and supporting children and families, and macro-level child welfare legislation that influences statewide policies and laws. She expressed gratitude for her cohort friendships, agency connections, and the professional networking opportunities available to students in CWTAP and their practicum at DCYF. To get the most out of her CWTAP experience, Payton has intentionally made herself “uncomfortable” by jumping in, asking questions, and taking advantage of every opportunity for growth.

Payton and her fiancé recently became engaged, so she is looking forward to their wedding on the Hawaiian island of Kauai this summer following graduation. Payton enjoys hiking, her preferred self-care activity, and painting with her grandparents when she visits them in the Tri-Cities.
**Alumni Spotlight**

**Christina Pastor**  
MSW, ICW CFWS Supervisor  
Smokey Point DCYF – Region 3

*By Kara Rozeboom*

Christina Pastor is a CWTAP alumni who graduated from EWU’s Everett Part Time MSW program in 2020. She obtained a Bachelor of Human Development with a minor in Psychology and a certificate in Family Studies from Washington State University in 2012.

While pursuing her undergraduate degree, Christina initially was going to study nursing. In her first year of studies, she didn’t do well with needles, blood, or tissue. After taking a course on Child Abuse and Neglect and interviewing a supervisor at the Smokey Point DCYF office, she declared Human Development as her major. In her senior year of her undergraduate education, she interned as a student in the Smokey Point ICW CFWS unit for one summer. After graduating in 2012, Christina worked as a Program Supervisor for Service Alternatives, a BRS group home. Then she worked as a site director for the YMCA child care before and after school program, as well as working as a para-educator with autistic children in the Mukilteo School District.

Christina started with Children’s Administration in 2014 as an ICW CFWS social service specialist in the Smokey Point DCYF office. She stayed in that position for five years. For her MSW practicum, she started off working on CPS cases but shortly after in 2019 was promoted to the Smokey Point DCYF office ICW CFWS Supervisor and has been there ever since.

Christina decided to apply to the MSW program and CWTAP because it broadened her knowledge and skills related to the social work field in general; like ethics, group classes, and an advanced generalist view. She said being a part of CWTAP made her a more holistic professional and that completing her MSW practicum at DCYF and working with her FFI helped her build connections. Christina stated that by doing CWTAP her foot was in the door to DCYF. Christina’s advice to current CWTAP students is to “Just apply. Just do it!” She said that once she applied and got started it wasn’t as overwhelming and difficult as she thought it would be. She reports that the skills you gain will only benefit you in the future, so take that leap of faith!

When Christina is not working, she enjoys spending time with her husband, daughter, and son. Christina enjoys crafting and using her Cricket, crocheting baby blankets, and reading.
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Resources

Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence
Child Welfare League of America
Children’s Defense Fund
Child Welfare Information Gateway
Casey Family Programs
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families

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