Every three years, Chi Sigma Iota publishes a special edition of the Exemplar which delves into an issue that is essential to our organizational mission. For this special edition, the Executive Council chose to highlight social justice. So, what is social justice? How does it relate to counseling? How does it relate to Chi Sigma Iota?

Belief in a Just World
Essentially, social justice refers to a belief in a just world where all individuals receive fair treatment and equal distribution of the benefits of society. As such, social justice counseling is counseling that recognizes and considers the impact of oppression, privilege, and discrimination on the mental health and wellness of all individuals (Chang & Gnilka, 2010). Counselors operating from a social justice framework work towards establishing equal distribution of power and resources through their advocacy activities. Given the disparity in power and resources, socially-just-minded counselors focus particularly on groups that have been disenfranchised based on their cultural heritage (Lee, 2007; Ratts, D’Andrea, & Arredondo, 2004; Speight & Vera, 2004).

Adjusting Our Roles as Counselors
Although social justice is not new to the counseling profession, recently it has received increased attention due to economic and societal shifts. More specifically, there is increased evidence that suggests a relationship between social injustice (e.g., oppression, discrimination, and prejudice) and mental health issues (see U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [USDHHS], 2001). With the growing recognition that social injustice hinders the mental health and thus, wellness of individuals, counselors must adjust their roles and responsibilities to include activities that foster a socially just world. Clearly, social justice is a central part of our responsibility as counselors.

Revising Our Vision
Social justice also is central to Chi Sigma Iota. Last year when the Strategic Planning Committee revised the vision statement of Chi Sigma Iota, they added the phrase “We promote a strong professional identity through members who contribute to the realization of a healthy society by fostering wellness and human dignity.” Social justice counseling is about the promotion of a healthy society with the ultimate goal of wellness and human dignity for all.

I recently returned from the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision Conference and was proud to participate in the Second Annual Social Justice Summit. It was inspiring to see how many CSI members were involved in the planning and implementation of

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Words of Appreciation Catharine Chang
I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Michael Brubaker, Associate Editor for the special edition, for his dedication and commitment to social justice and his assistance with editing the chapter activities and personal narratives. My sincere gratitude also goes to all the members and chapters that submitted their activities and challenge each of us to think about what we can do as individuals and as chapters to work towards social justice. Also, I would like to thank and acknowledge Cathy Woodyard, Exemplar Editor Emeritus, for serving as consultant for this edition. Finally, I would like to thank Elizabeth Hodges for her help with the layout for this special edition.

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this event and how many CSI members attended and actively participated. There were CSI members on the Social Justice Summit Planning committee, CSI members serving as small group facilitators, CSI members serving as room monitors, CSI members participating in the closing candle ceremony, and CSI members attending as participants.

Exemplar’s Special Edition
Throughout this special edition, you will read examples of how individual members and chapters are engaging in activities that promote wellness and human dignity. Additionally, you will find resources and activities that bring to awareness and promote social justice issues. You also will hear the voices from a wide range of our members and their perspectives on social justice, and how social justice relates to them as students, counselor educators, and practitioners. Clearly, CSI members are supporting, participating, and engaging in activities that promote social justice and social justice is at the heart of CSI.

References

CSI’s Commitment to Social Justice: A Look through History
Kristin Meany-Walen, CSI Intern, Rho Kappa
Tonya Murphy Jasinski. CSI Fellow, Upsilon Sigma Chi

Social justice in counseling can be understood as the active striving towards fairness and opportunity of all people regardless of status, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender, ability, etc. Counselors work towards social justice in a number of ways: confronting injustice in society, advocating for clients, soliciting services for groups of people, and advocating for the counseling profession. In recent years, the counseling profession has made an overt attempt to bring awareness of the need for social justice and provide resources to help counselors in their own quest to promote social justice within their clientele, their community, and throughout the world.

Ethical and Professional Responsibility
The American Counseling Association (ACA) has long been an active proponent in social justice. Within ACA’s mission statement is their declaration “to enhance the quality of life in society.” Furthermore, according to ACA’s Code of Ethics (2005), section C:

Counselors actively participate in local, state, and national associations that foster the development and improvement of counseling. Counselors advocate to promote change at the individual, group, institutional, and societal levels that improves the quality of life for individuals and (continued on page 3)
groups and remove potential barriers to the provision or access of appropriate services being offered. (p. 9)

Thus, counselors have an ethical obligation and professional responsibility to advocate for societal issues. While the explicit pursuit of social justice may seem new, the responsibility for all counselors seems to be ingrained into our professional identity. "Advocating for clients of oppressed backgrounds is an indicator of counseling excellence!" (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004, p. 11).

With this in mind, social justice efforts on the part of professional counselors is not new and is not in addition to what counselors do already. The heavy focus on social justice is a reminder to all counselors that the mission extends beyond the clients in our office, the students in our class, or the professionals in our organizations. Social justice is an ethical obligation and professional honor which counselors have been a part for a number of years and will continue to develop throughout our careers.

CSI and Social Justice

Chi Sigma Iota was established in 1985 in part to recognize outstanding achievements of professional counselors. It is now time to look back and recognize the outstanding work of CSI. After a thorough review of the Exemplar, the authors found that CSI International, chapters, and members have been involved in social justice activities since CSI’s inception. Throughout the years, the Exemplar has maintained a focus on our ever-changing world. CSI has been involved in social justice by way of presenting workshops, providing community service, contributing funding for projects and research through grants, spreading the word of social advocacy through published articles, and many other creative efforts.

More specifically, leaders, chapters, and members have conducted social justice workshops on topics such as survivors of trauma; multicultural awareness which included issues of sexual orientation, age, gender, social class; schools and children; community; family; student and professional counselors; and specific topics such as survivors of family violence. The 1996 CSI Day was dedicated to multicultural counseling and implications for counselors with one panelist eluding that "when specific groups are not provided access to societal rights or instructions due to barriers imposed by others, cultural distinctions arise" (Letiecq, 1996, p. 7).

Chapters and members of CSI described how they offered community services to meet the needs of society. Activities included events such as walk-a-thons for children or people living with HIV/AIDS; adopting families by offering gifts of clothing or food to those in need; organizing local clothing and food drives; volunteering at children’s or homeless shelters; and building homes with Habitat for Humanity. Following the devastating attack on our nation on 9-11, several chapters and CSI leaders described becoming involved in local blood drives and Red Cross activities.

Contributors of CSI have generously donated money to financially assist counseling professionals in exploring effective ways of providing services to others via leadership and advocacy. Some examples of grants awarded have funded projects that have focused on students of low-income families and multicultural studies.

More creative endeavors have included building a foundational relationship with elementary and secondary schools in Tema, Ghana, West Africa. CSI leaders have initiated relationships with universities outside of the United States. Another example included school counselors advocating for gay and lesbian students through their school district and administration. Lastly, the Epsilon Mu Chi chapter’s students and faculty actively recruited ethnic minorities to their graduate school and provided information about financial aid to assist these students with graduate school preparation.

The Exemplar has published a number of contributions throughout the years which have focused on social justice issues in counseling. To name a few, CSI current President Dr. Catharine Chang and Dr. Brian Dew discussed “Promoting Professional and Social Advocacy” in Moorhead’s Faculty Advisor Highlight section of the Exemplar (Spring, 2005). Dr. Courtland Lee wrote “Counseling in a Changing World” (Fall Special Edition, 2003) and “Empowerment through Social Activism” (Fall, 1995). This is by no means an exhaustive list; rather, it is an example of how CSI has been and continues to be involved in social justice advocacy.

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As a counselor educator, my scholarship encompasses teaching, research, and service activities. Similarly, my commitment to social justice ideology and practice is infused into these same three intersecting arenas. Although over the past decade there has been increasing attention to the importance of social justice across the helping professions (Drevdahl, Kneipp, Canales, & Dorcy, 2001; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001), there is little consensus on what this work actually entails. Within counseling, social justice has been defined as a value, action, process, and goal (Green, McCollum, & Hays, 2008). However, reference to my scholarship and social justice can be characterized according to what Goodman and colleagues (2004) described as efforts to amplify the voices of those whose experiences and perspectives have historically been marginalized and oppressed. This work can take many forms but by definition it involves a connection to the individuals, groups, and communities whose voices remain underrepresented.

I am fortunate to be employed by an institution that both values and supports community engagement through scholarship in action (Cantor, 2009), as it is through such a collaborative university-community partnership that I have been able to effectively incorporate social justice into my teaching, research, and service.

As an Educator

Within my role as an instructor, I understand my responsibilities related to social justice to include more than merely exposing my counseling students to principles of social justice in the classroom. I also create structured opportunities for students to go into the community so that they can increase their awareness of the multifaceted issues impacting the experiences of historically marginalized and oppressed individuals and groups. Only within this context can students begin to acquire the knowledge and skills that will be necessary to enact advocacy on behalf of their clients (Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002; Vera & Speight, 2003). For example, in a school counseling course that I taught, my students participated in a semester long field experience with high school gay-straight alliance groups. Although the coordination of student activities including supervision across numerous schools was involved, course evaluations revealed that students found the field-based experiential learning to be a catalyst in their growth over the semester, specifically noting the impact of hearing the voices of the gay-straight alliance group members. This is just one example wherein student learning can be augmented when the counselor education classroom is extended beyond the university proper and students can be authentically engaged with individuals, groups, and communities.

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There may be a belief that being active in the community or becoming familiar with community resources was somehow outside the realm of the counselor’s professional responsibility” (Vera & Speight, 2007).

Social justice remains a concept that is rarely discussed in master’s graduate training. There seems to be only a few professors who encourage graduate students to look beyond the office when conducting counseling, but the majority emphasizes practice, theories, ethics, and even client empowerment from a non-contextual, traditional perspective. As current graduate students, we found the latter teachings were hard to grasp. How can counseling only happen inside a closed room when clients participate in the outside world on a daily basis? Though we can certainly continue counseling within an office, the question remains, “Are we really making a difference?” Embracing the theory of Emancipatory Communitarianism (Prilleltensky, 1997), we sought to learn beyond the traditional classroom setting and begin to practice counseling in our community through engaged research.

Engaged Field Research

This theory was the foundation of a dissertation research project to understand the barriers to substance abuse and mental health service utilization among persons without housing. Now in the final stages, this project has taught us many lessons about how counselors can promote social justice. The following personal reflections share a taste of that experience through each of our eyes.

Emancipatory Communitarianism

Indeed, it is a great feeling to come across a theory which demands freedom for our clients and social responsibility from all of us. Emancipatory Communitarianism (EC) is a clear contrast from traditional theories such as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy which focuses on changing the individual. The EC approach serves to emancipate all individuals from oppression through distributive justice (Prilleltensky, 1997). Furthermore, within EC is the word “communion” which connotes engaging one another in a time of need. Therefore, the proponents of this model are inclined to change systems that perpetuate social injustices, engaging one another as partners to respond to our community needs.

Niyama’s Memories

“Tired to learn from those I serve, and that was the most effective lesson in my experience,” remembers Niyama. “The reality of a person’s life can hardly be denied or overlooked when we are in the middle of it. Some of the lessons that I had previously tried to grasp in classrooms and clinical settings finally took root in me because I somehow forgot about being either a student or a counselor; surprisingly, I had been learning how to be a human instead. All the “facts” that I “knew” about people without homes are being replaced with an appreciation for the complexities of reality and a human understanding.”

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Michael’s Reflections

Michael writes that this experience involved people inside and outside the department: “There are many times when we were striving to lift the binds of oppression and inviting others to do the same. By walking into our local mayor’s office to advocate for those without housing, we sought a partner who would open doors to the city and county commissioner meetings who will make

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Ongoing Efforts

Social justice is not a passing fad; it has been here and is here to stay. Members of CSI know this is an important theme interwoven throughout the identity of professional counselors as evidenced by the continued efforts of CSI members and chapters. We wish to recognize all members of CSI for their outstanding contribution to social justice. Thank you for what you have done and we look forward to what will come. “Being international and caring begins in one’s neighborhood with a commitment to reach out beyond oneself. It is something we all can do” (Gladding, 1996, p. 2).

References


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A New Understanding of Social Justice

By moving beyond the traditional settings of teaching and clinical practice, each of us began to understand social justice by witnessing injustices and trying to make a difference. We believe that this is the responsibility of all of us and is the mark of counseling excellence towards which we strive.

References


Working Towards Social Justice Awareness & Action: Chapter Challenge

Sponsor a retreat where the leaders of the chapter openly discuss the role of social justice and the chapter. Questions to consider: do we as a chapter want to embrace social justice in our activities? How does social justice relate to our mission as a professional honor society? How do our chapter activities reflect the CSI international’s vision statement of contributing to the “realization of a healthy society by fostering wellness and human dignity. How can our chapter and professional counselors be associated with contributing to such efforts alone or in conjunction with existing services?

Sponsor a food drive, clothing drive, or a school supply drive through which the chapter is identified.

Identify a cause that is important to your chapter and community and start a letter writing campaign. Find out who your legislators are in Congress and at the state level. Prepare a form letter and send out to your members who are willing to submit the letters to their legislators. You can keep abreast of current activities in Washington DC by joining the ACA Government Listserv.

Organize a day of service for your chapter members with local service organizations that work towards social justice issues that are important to your chapter. This day of service can involve volunteering at your program’s practicum and internship sites.
CSI members often seek opportunities to become involved in social justice. Below are accounts from some members of their experiences locally, nationally, and internationally.

**In Malaysia**

Before the 1980s in Malaysia, the term autism was neither heard of nor understood. The Lions Clubs in Malaysia adopted the Lions Resource and Education for Autistic Children (Lions REACh) as a five-year project to promote awareness and understanding of this so-called “new disability.” Now 20 years later, we have 10 services and 13 teaching-learning programs. All these services and programs aim to provide for the holistic development of the child with autism. Mr. E.C. Lim, Chairman, has the vision and commitment to secure funding, while I prepare the framework and the programs for the children and their families. We take pride in our work to include such children and adults with autism into our society.

Submitted by Dr. See Ching Mey

**Heidi M. Grove-Voiles**

**In Texas**

Working with battered women, I have learned not only from my clients but have worked with law enforcement, medical professionals and social workers. My experiences have given me a well-rounded view of how social justice works in our society. Without having this knowledge, I would not have been able to advocate or promote social justice effectively. Just as we have all learned what mental health is in order to promote it, we must learn what social justice is in order to advocate for it. This feat is accomplished not in a mere semester but is a process that lasts a lifetime, one that I intend to stay committed to.

Submitted by Anjabeen Ashraf

**In Florida**

Helping thousands of people last year, 17 counseling students (7 CSI members) at the University of Florida volunteered an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 hours to the Alachua County Crisis Center. After 60 hours of training, volunteers assisted clients throughout the community through phone or face-to-face counseling. A phone volunteer is often responsible for answering local crisis lines, national suicide hotlines, rumor control, business calls, and the United Way Information and Referral line. Face-to-face counseling occurs at the center or in the community, responding in homes, hospitals, or accident scenes. In addition, volunteers train law enforcement officers to practice active listening skills to respond to citizens in crisis.

Submitted by Cheryl Pence Wolf

**In Nepal**

It has been one year since I first collaborated with Dr. Jeffrey Kottler to work with lower caste girls in Nepal who would otherwise not be allowed to attend school (www.ghimirefoundation.org). After three visits to the country, I am now in charge of coordinating volunteers to mentor in remote villages. Although I went to help others, what I could not have anticipated is how much these children and this country have transformed me! I am now completing a research study about how other women have changed from

Submitted by Kapa Omega members visit Nepal.

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Social Justice and Private Practice: My Privilege
Kathleen M. Connolly, Upsilon Nu Chi

When my colleague Dr. Catharina Chang approached me to write this piece, I agreed without hesitation. The task: How do I, a professional member of CSI, incorporate social justice into my private practice? No problem, I am on it.

I immediately reflected on my days in graduate school when I first conceptualized multicultural counseling, heard the phrase, the personal is political, or watched The Color of Fear and really got it. I remember the sensation of panic that I had – had I lived this long without getting it? How could that be? Privilege, of course; the obvious answer. Long discussions about internalized oppression, feminist theory, and patriarchy excited me. I could feel new neuro-pathways developing. Phew, I get it.

I can remember what it felt like to experience my privilege as a white woman and simultaneously be aware of my marginality. I recall being able to articulate what all of this meant. Theorizing, wondering, talking about issues of social justice with my colleagues was a gift I never knew that I would receive and for that I remain grateful. In my mind, one’s ability to understand and feel these issues without eschewing them is what separates the good from those who aspire to be, well, excellent. So, here’s my chance, I can write about social justice and therapy, maybe even give something back to a professional society who had a firm hand in encouraging my own excellence.

The Intersection of Theory and Practice

I sat down to write, to share how I bring my awareness of social justice to my professional practice, how I incorporate these knowings into the work I love so much. The result? Blank screen. Uh oh. What was wrong? I get it...why the block? What does this mean? Then that familiar feeling – the frustration I feel at the intersection of theory and practice. In theory, of course social justice is an underpinning of doing good therapy, yet in practice, what did that really look like?

I have been in a very fortunate (yes, privileged) position for nearly 10 years as a private practitioner. Each year, further away from those intellectual discussions about racism, feminism, post-modernism, I felt isolated. Had I lost sight of this in exchange for managing my life client-by-client, hour-by-hour, symptom-by-symptom? Cursing the ivory tower from whence theory flows was easy. How could “they” understand what it is really like for “us”? Day in and day out, seeing clients, planning treatment, worrying about whether I’d have enough clients each week, keeping up on continuing education, cleaning my office, purchasing a new printer (again), getting my taxes done, urgh. I do not even have the hassle of managed care yet am keenly aware that many of my colleagues spend countless hours battling third party payers. Where was the time for “us” advocates to speak out?

Intimate Isolation

Private practice is a business. It is one client at a time. It is intimate isolation. While I know that I frequently refer to the larger contexts in which my clients operate, I rarely have to confront directly the issues that those in community mental health or agency work might. I have it pretty easy don’t I? Then it occurred to me. Do I have private-practice-privilege?

I was not quite frantic, yet I was uncomfortable, which in my world, in counseling and therapy, is actually a good sign. Out of that discomfort, I asked myself a question that I ask my clients: Are you curious about what it is like to be with you right now?

Being with Me

What is it like for my clients to be with me in session? Do they feel heard, cared for, respected by me? Do they feel like I get it, get them, get what its like to be them in their shoes when they leave my office and return to their lives? Do my non-white, non-Eurocentric clients experience me as safe? Do my white clients feel safe? Am I just, fair? How would I know?

“I can remember what it felt like to experience my privilege as a white woman and simultaneously be aware of my marginality.”

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On the Receiving End of Social Justice: Homeless….to UNI
Katrina Webbeking, Upsilon Nu Iota

Looking back, I never imagined that I would currently be a graduate student in the Mental Health Counseling Program at University of Northern Iowa, much less attend a four year institution for my previous undergraduate studies. If anyone had ever told me that I could rise above circumstances and become reasonably successful in my own right, I would have politely scoffed at their ignorance. People like me, I thought, do not get to better themselves in pursuit of white picket fence dreams.

I was homeless and fresh out of a women’s shelter. I had no resources. I had the clothes on my back, an active mind, two good legs and not much else. However, I was determined. I also had hopes -- perhaps one day, I would accomplish great things. Perhaps one day I would be in a position to help myself and other people just as I had enjoyed offering comfort to other shelter residents, who, by comparison, were not as fortunate. I knew the road ahead would be rocky, but I wanted desperately to believe against all odds that I could get to where I needed to go. Quite simply, I had dreams and ambitions that I refused to relinquish. There were programs within my community that could help me. I would seek them out. I would do the footwork and jump through the hoops.

My tenacity paid off. Community agencies across northeast Iowa and a few socially conscious persons committed to addressing the needs of the disadvantaged stepped up to the plate and helped me find equal footing among other members of society until I was able to stand on my own. What an amazing freedom to go from living in shelters to being able to plant my roots in a safe environment conducive to personal and professional growth!

The aforementioned persons and agencies provided me with the services necessary to meet my basic needs for food, shelter, safety, love and support. As a result of their assistance, I was afforded the chance to fulfill my dream of becoming a mental health counselor. Further, I developed a profound appreciation for having had the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than myself. I was again a part of a community and perhaps someday in someway I would be able to repay these persons and agencies for their kindness, dedication, and their belief in me when I had not yet fully come to believe in myself or my abilities to achieve.

Today when I work with or interact with others in my community, I feel a deep sense of gratitude for those who have helped me achieve my goals and for being given the opportunity to return the favor through my work as a potential mental health counselor. I believe that this experience has taught me the value of persistence, compassion, and instillation of hope in the clients with whom I will be working.

Working Towards Social Justice Awareness and Action: Personal Challenge

Create a Multicultural Counseling and Social Justice Competence Professional Development Plan using the online assessment at www.toporek.org.

Celebrate your birthday (or your children’s birthday) by researching a cause that is important to you (e.g., hunger, women’s rights, education for all youths) and collect resources (e.g., can foods, women’s shelter supplies, books) for an organization that supports that cause.

Consider gifting through programs like www.heifer.org and www.kiva.org

Review the advocacy competencies (http://counselorsforsocialjustice.com/advocacycompetencies.html) and mark the ones that you participate in and develop a plan of action for engaging in some of the other competencies.
As a Researcher

Just as counselors need to move beyond their counseling offices to appropriately intervene when working with oppressed and disenfranchised clients (Goodman et al., 2004; Vera & Speight, 2003), so too do counselor educators when conducting quality social justice research. Towards these ends, much of my research agenda is subsumed within a scholarship in action framework (Cantar, 2009) where the collaborative university-community engagement includes advocacy as well as an inquiry into the process or an investigation of the related outcomes. Illustrating this is a project in which I am working to develop and implement professional development for urban school counselors to support their work towards college access for all students, specifically students living in poverty.

Nationally, the proportion of students applying to, attending, and graduating from college has been found to increase proportionately with family income. Students living in poverty often have less access to educational support services and college-related information as well as the instrumental and psycho-social resources to navigate successfully the college search process. However, it has been recognized that what schools, families, and communities do to address these systemic barriers to support student learning and college access is a better predictor than who the students are that receive the services (Bryan, 2005; Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Thus, consistent with the larger aims of social justice, this project seeks to document the work of school counselors in bridging the achievement and opportunity gaps for students living in poverty so that the requisite knowledge and skills can be broadly in other contexts.

As a CSI Faculty Advisor

Over the past several years, my university service commitment has included being Chapter Faculty Advisor to my program’s Chi Sigma Iota chapter. In this capacity, I take seriously my responsibilities to promote leadership, advocacy, and professional identity in both professional and student members (Myers, Sweeney & White, 2002).

Accordingly, I acknowledge that integral to the mission of Chi Sigma Iota is a genuine commitment to social justice in action. Reflecting this, as Chapter Faculty Advisor I have assisted members in organizing professional development workshops related to both professional and counselor advocacy, as well as facilitated member engagement in service projects designed to address identified needs in the surrounding community, such as tutoring with Bantu refugees, a clothing and food drive to benefit a local homeless shelter, and participation in the delivery of anxiety and depression screenings at several community centers.

As Wester and Lewis (2005) reported that participation in Chi Sigma Iota was viewed as an integral part of a student’s educational experience, Chi Sigma Iota sponsored service experiences have the potential to also be formative in the development in a student’s commitment to social justice. While it has been my experience that the Chapter Faculty Advisor can work with members to incorporate social justice into almost all levels of Chi Sigma Iota chapter functioning, it would be expected that social justice aims could be incorporated into other service activities as well.

Working in Tandem

Only upon reflection for the purposes of writing this article did I recognize that as a counselor educator, I have enacted a tripartite commitment to giving voice to individuals and groups whose perspective and experience has not been heard. Taken collectively, my teaching, research, and service endeavors appear to work to promote first-order, second-order, and third-order change, and thereby increase the likelihood for the long-term sustainability of such social justice activities (Bartunek & Moch, 1987). Counselor educators may want to consider how their research, teaching, and service activities can work in tandem to intentionally reflect the values implicit in their work including social justice and others promoted by Chi Sigma Iota.

References


Each year CSI chapters form goals and plans for their upcoming year. Included are activities which reach out to individuals in their community and projects which make members aware of the larger needs of their clients. Below are some of the activities and projects CSI chapters have engaged in to address social justice for their clients and their communities.

**Upsilon Nu Kappa**
For the past two years, students and faculty members of Upsilon Nu Kappa chapter at the University of Nebraska at Kearney have traveled to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Their goals were to promote cross-cultural awareness and knowledge, to establish a collaborative relationship with reservation residents in order to implement service initiatives, and to enhance the perception of the counseling profession on the reservation. This student-developed activity involved hands-on experiences in professional advocacy by promoting networking among counseling professionals and strengthening intercultural interactions. Through this collaboration, students became familiarized with and connected to the Lakota culture and started to develop the skills necessary for effective advocacy. *Submitted by Jessica Vickers*

**Omega Delta**
Old Dominion University’s (ODU) Omega Delta chapter organizes multiple social justice projects each year. Last fall, the community service committee ran a holiday toy drive for ForKids, an organization which assists homeless children and families. The chapter also adopted Harbour Pointe Medical and Rehabilitation Facility, a nursing home where Omega Delta members shared stories, played games and participated in other activities with the residents. Many residents do not receive regular visitors which makes this experience even more significant to Omega Delta members and residents alike.

In addition, the chapter’s multicultural and diversity committee works on issues related to recruitment and retention of minority and male students in ODU’s counseling programs. In order to understand their unique needs, students and faculty members were invited to discuss methods in which the counseling program can provide support. Several positive initiatives resulted including: providing more professional mentorship for students of color and males, creation of diversity interest network, stipends to support multicultural research, and maintaining a recruitment network with regional and national undergraduate and graduate programs. *Submissions from Rebecca McBride, Rebekah Byrd, Brian Shaw, and Jasmine Knight*

**Omega Kappa Upsilon**
On our campus at Western Kentucky University, a student named Crystal approached President Ransdale requesting funds to hire interpreters on behalf of her and other hearing-impaired students on campus. Unfortunately, her request was met with a shocking response: Times are tough, and we just don’t have the money for you. In response, Omega Kappa Upsilon has been working with other student organizations to help Crystal and the three other hearing-impaired students on campus. Our goal is to help the American Sign Language students start an ASL club through which members could earn experience as interpreters for classmates. Our hearing impaired students would receive the accommodations they need through their classmates’ interpreting as well as...

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Omega Lambda Lambda

The Omega Lambda Lambda chapter of Chi Sigma Iota at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, has taken a leadership role in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of University Familia: Pathway to Higher Education. With the goal of increasing participation in post-secondary education, this unique program allows Hispanic middle school students and their families the opportunity to participate in a full-day college experience at our university. Each participating family is assigned an individual school counselor-in-training whose responsibility it is to escort the family throughout the day. Activities include a welcoming Mass, an overview of life on a college campus, a tour, tailored college classroom experiences taught by University faculty, presentations devoted to academic readiness, career exploration, and financial planning. University Familia is grant funded with no charge to families. Submitted by Cullen Grinnan

Beta Upsilon

In observance of Domestic Violence Awareness month, Beta Upsilon Chapter partnered with the Barry University Center for Counseling & Psychological Services, Women in Distress of Broward County, and representatives from various universities for a month long series of activities in both 2007 and 2008. Two unique activities were a Survivors’ of Abuse panel and a violence prevention baby shower. These events sought to promote awareness of and education about domestic violence and to develop prevention and intervention strategies for victims and their families. Furthermore, the chapter created a showcase displaying local and national domestic violence statistics, the different forms of domestic violence and abuse, and where abuse victims can go for help. Currently, the chapter is incorporating guest lectures into its monthly general meetings to learn how to serve HIV-infected clients, clients with sexuality issues, and victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. Submitted by Cindy George

Iota Delta Sigma

In an attempt to advocate for those who have been economically marginalized, Iota Delta Sigma (IDS) at Auburn University hosted Poverty Week, a five-day forum exploring poverty from a local, state and national perspective. Activities included speakers, chapter meetings, panel discussions, and fundraising. Given the current economy, we donated proceeds from several fundraisers to the Auburn Food Bank. One particularly inspiring fundraiser was the development of a t-shirt with a question mark for a face asking, “The new face of poverty. Could be you?” Every academic year, IDS members identify an advocacy topic. Past initiatives have included anti-hate/anti-discrimination and supporting military families. Submitted by Amanda M Thomas, Chapter President

Beta

Throughout the 2008-2009 academic year, the Beta Chapter at the University of Florida spearheaded several events focusing on populations including the homeless, domestic violence victims, and a low income family. During the fall semester, a Homeless is not Hopeless panel was held, which consisted of three previously homeless members who shared gripping accounts of their homeless experiences and ways counselors can effectively help. For the holidays, a Stocking Stuffing for the Homeless event resulted in more than 100 pairs of socks stuffed with food and toiletries donated by counseling students, faculty, and staff. Later that spring, a brown bag event was hosted with the Director of Violence Prevention at Peaceful Paths who discussed her work combating domestic violence. Finally, the chapter partnered with Rebuilding Together to renovate the home of a low income family. Ten Beta Chapter members spent a Saturday cleaning, painting, plumbing, repairing roof tiles, and replacing dry wall to improve the quality of life for that family. Submitted by Laura Reid and Cheryl Pence

Beta Alpha

The Beta Alpha chapter at Northern Arizona University is in the process of organizing a clothing and food drive to assist the homeless population in our community. The Flagstaff Shelter Services, whose mission is to provide homeless men and women shelter and services and to assist them in obtaining stable housing. (continued on page 13)
Sigma Upsilon

The Sigma Upsilon chapter at Syracuse University has initiated social justice activities including raising membership awareness of local and federal counseling legislation, as well as organizing letter writing campaigns to increase government consideration of mental health and wellness issues. In addition, in lieu of purely social activities, Sigma Upsilon decided to sponsor ‘teams’ of members who participate in community activism and advocacy efforts such as the Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism Duck Race, Day of Silence Rally, Take Back the Night March, Suicide Prevention Day, Multiple Sclerosis Walk, and even a Prom Dress Distribution. Sigma Upsilon has also collected children’s clothing for an orphanage in Uganda, prepared and distributed holiday food baskets for local families, and assisted families in the completion of health insurance and financial aid applications, among other activities. Instead of organizing a single social justice event, Sigma Upsilon has integrated social justice concerns into many chapter sponsored activities throughout the year. Submitted by Danielle Richards

Iota Phi

Dr. Lily Rosqueta Rosales and Dr. Leticia Rebillon engage their graduates in outreach counseling and first responder training with each typhoon and flood. Indeed, they have traveled to Thailand and elsewhere in their region to help those less fortunate. Iota Phi also has established a foundation to which their members contribute to provide workshops for those who live and work in the far reaches of the islands and unable to attend conferences.

Psi

This year our Psi chapter at the University of Missouri – St. Louis has participated in a number of social justice activities designed to increase client and community improvement in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Below is a summary of our chapter’s social justice efforts:

- Conducted a campus voter registration drive during the 2008 Presidential campaign.
- Conducted a coat, food, and book drive for students of Bryan Hill Elementary school. (Our chapter collected over $200.00 worth of goods.)
- Volunteered our time reading books to elementary students who needed additional instructional time.
- Presented papers by two members at local conferences. (These two papers dealt with understanding the elderly, in addition to the needs of gifted children.)

Submitted by Angela D. Coker, Faculty Advisor

(continued from page 12)

will be closing its overnight shelter at the end of April. We decided to enlist donations for the shelter. Our plan of action is to provide boxes for people to place donations and then bring them to the Flagstaff Shelter Services. In this way, our chapter is helping to promote social justice in our local community. Submitted by Danielle Richards

Clients come to counseling with specific needs and expectations that their problems will be resolved...anxiety, infidelity, and insomnia, what have you. It is reasonable that their larger contexts fade into the background from time to time. Clients want solutions, direction, they want help. Do they want me to, need me to, require me to understand internalized objectification, white privilege? Consciously, probably not, but I know that much of therapy I do is occurring just under the surface; it is unconscious. Hence, I feel moved by the challenge to be curious about the extent to which the safe place I provide has been informed by my sensitivity to issues like social justice. Whether I “do” social justice or am a multicultural counselor need not be consciously known to my clients, yet it is likely in part what they need to feel safe and experience the work that shapes their healing.

The Right Question to Ask

Therefore, I will keep asking what it is like for my clients to be with me because it is the right question to ask. It is what makes me accountable to any client with whom I have the privilege of working with, who comes to me with his anguish, with her trauma, and shares it because maybe I can help. Now that is private practice privilege.
Mental health is an integral part of our overall health but it has been long recognized as a stigma that most people wish to avoid. Consequently, while about one in five Americans experience a mental disorder each year, nearly 60% of people with a diagnosable mental disorder do not seek or cannot attain the appropriate treatment (U.S. Surgeon General, 2005). While this statistic comes as a surprise to policymakers, community leaders, and the media, it is an indication that more must be done to ensure good mental health for all citizens.

The mission of the Chi Sigma Iota Advocacy Committee is to advocate for the profession of counseling by calling attention to how counselors contribute to a better society by promoting wellness and dignity for all. The counselor’s efforts are often with one student, one classroom, one family, or one individual at a time. We are interested in promoting counseling services that are linked directly to these goals regardless of setting or clientele. CSIs Advocacy Committee is charged with helping chapters and members, regardless of work setting, to promote a mental health approach that benefits all individuals. Within particular communities, this may include any group of people who lack access to needed resources, or any marginalized group that may be oppressed or denied mental health services.

**Committee Goals**

The strategic goals of the CSI Advocacy Committee include organizing efforts among counselors to develop resources aimed at strengthening the profession. In addition, the committee works towards calling attention to the counseling needs of all persons. These goals include promoting the importance of counseling services within communities and in societal systems such as schools, churches, social services, businesses, and the medical community. Similar to physical illness, counseling issues may arise due to an array of life circumstances such as life transitions, job loss, heredity, and injury. Everyone has a right to services which ensure one’s ability to live with or to transcend life’s trials.

Mental health is a community issue and professional counselors have committed to ensuring that the provision of mental health services include counseling for those who have mental health diagnoses and feel marginalized by society because of their race, religious ideology, sexual preference, gender, age, socioeconomic status or ethnicity, among other factors that contribute to individual or group uniqueness or oppression. Our focus includes promoting positive mental health across the life span. It is imperative to the overall health of the community to listen and support the voice of those who feel isolated from counseling services. The members of this committee and of Chi Sigma Iota as a whole are charged with actively promoting and contributing to the services necessary for every member of a community.

**A Charge for Each of Us**

To be a member of Chi Sigma Iota demonstrates that each of us strives for excellence not only in our professional lives but our personal lives as well. Each member of CSI is charged to make an impact on our profession and on our communities by promoting human dignity and social justice for all.

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**The goal of social justice counseling is to promote access and equality to all persons focusing particularly on those groups who have been dis-enfranchised based on their cultural/ethnic background (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, sexual identity).**

Must Reads

Non-Academic


Fiction


In North Carolina
I currently work as a consultant for the North Carolina (NC) Department of Public Instruction, serving as an advocate for underrepresented students throughout the state. In this role, my task includes directing Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. These programs are historically underrepresented by African Americans, Hispanic/Latinos, and American Indians, especially here in North Carolina. I consult, advocate and lobby on their behalf about strategies to increase their representation. I collaborate with and provide leadership to teachers, school counselors, principals, superintendents and politicians. There is a long road ahead, but I am on the right track! Submitted by Angela Dowden

In Georgia
We facilitated a community-wide fundraising effort to provide a computer lab and an interactive software package to enable probationers in a community-based correctional facility to obtain the skills needed to obtain a GED. We also coordinated civic presentations and put together a broad-based Advisory Council to support offenders in their reentry efforts into the community and their families. Submitted by Shannon Eller and Rachael Hopkins

In the Philippines
In 1988, CSI Life Members Dr. Rodulfo Esteves and Dr. Felomin Gargar combined their varied backgrounds, unique training, and interests to create St. Peter’s Counseling Home, The Holy Child Colleges of Butuan and the Holy Child Colleges of Butuan Hospital. After two decades, the founders continue to dream of organizing an even larger therapeutic community where everyone enjoys a place of welcome. They envision homes for older persons, abandoned children, substance abusers, and those psychologically impaired. Submitted by Tom Sweeney
Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Launch of Exemplar New Look!

Thomas J. Sweeney, Executive Director, CSI

Our 25th Anniversary and Social Justice: The Heart of Chi Sigma Iota seemed the appropriate combination of occasion and focus to feature the new look of the Exemplar. After 17 years of able leadership by Dr. Cathy Woodward, Editor Emeritus, Dr. Dana Levitt became our Editor this past year. During this time of transition and strategic planning, we revisited our purpose for this our chief publication.

Articles in the Exemplar have been reprinted for use in classes and workshops and are often cited in professional articles and books. So we decided that the quality of articles should remain a constant but we wanted a new look with color, more pictures, “ghosting” techniques and more! So we needed an appropriate launching for this our special issue.

Today more than ever we witness a world that is shrinking in scope because of travel and technology. While the wealthiest nation in the world, we are far from the exemplar of social justice. Asking what needs to be done in social justice can result in feeling that it is just too big a problem to tackle. However, Mahatma Gandhi’s famous advice resonates throughout these pages: You must be the change you wish to see in the world!

This Special Edition Editor Dr. Catharine Chang has brought us hope through specific illustrations of how CSI members and chapters work to “…contribute to the realization of a healthy society by fostering well-being and human dignity.” You will find creative, simple but impactful ideas, projects, and acts of kindness on every page reaching around the globe. Let each of us join them where we live and work as makers of change for a more just world.