



LWV presents Mental Health Study

“The combined system of mental health services (in Greene County) is underfunded, uncoordinated and afflicted with bureaucratic hurdles.”

That sobering reality check is part of 24-page report recently released by the League of Women Voters of Southwest Missouri.

“By default,” says Lisa Hall, co-chair of the Mental Health Study, “the Greene County jail is the largest mental health facility in Southwest Missouri.”

Two years ago, reported Hall, LWV decided that the availability and accessibility of mental healthcare services for adults in Greene County was a topic that needed to be looked into. “Mental health care providers here are compassionate and skillful,” she stated, “but restrictive li-

censing regulations, the high cost of training and stringent reimbursement guidelines have resulted in a shortage of providers.”

Hall notes that states today spend much less on direct mental health services than they did 60 years ago, about 12% of what was spent in 1955.

Moving forward, Hall says a number of suggestions have been made; among them:

Educate the community to change attitudes and garner support, increase coordination among service providers,

revise medical and hospital practices, increase the number of providers, require health plans to cover more and expand allowable services and reimbursement.

“We’re not alone,” says Hall (pictured below), “this is the case across the nation. It’s a top priority and needs improvement.”



Workshop Registers 100+

Continuing Education Workshops are offered by Center City Counseling Clinic in both the spring and fall semesters.

This season’s presentations featured “Psychopharmacology for Mental Health Professionals” and “Dealing With Difficult

People.”

Over 115 counselors, social workers, case managers, educators and other mental health workers registered causing a change-in-location to larger accommodations at Plaster Student Union on campus.

Workshops cost \$20 each and are part of the clinic’s Outreach.



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Dr. Paul Maddox Hired For MSU Counseling Program

Missouri State University and Center City Counseling Clinic welcomes Dr. Paul Maddox this fall. Maddox and Dr. Taryne Mingo (to be featured in the Spring newsletter) are the latest additions to the Counseling Masters Program.

Dr. Maddox, who graduated from the University of Wyoming (Laramie) with a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision this past May, at first aspired to be a High School music teacher. "That changed during my last year as an undergraduate," laughs Maddox. "Music became my minor and psychology my major."

Maddox goes on to explain; "I worked at the Cox Health inpatient psychiatric unit after graduating from Missouri State University, and met a number of counselors, social workers, psychologists and psychi-

atrists. I was really drawn to the empathy and connection counselors had with their clients. It was the right fit for me."

Following a BA in Psychology at MSU, Maddox went on to complete a Masters in Community Counseling at Southeast Missouri State University (Cape Girardeau), and a Specialist degree in Counseling Education, before finishing his doctorate in Wyoming.

Maddox indicates that he was drawn to Springfield area for a variety of reasons: "I like Springfield," he says. "It's big enough but not too big." He continues, "It's also halfway between my family in southeast Missouri and my wife's family in Kansas City."

Additionally, Maddox says he was looking for a counseling program that had an established Play Therapy Institute,

open and interested students, good interactions between faculty and students and a program that had or was in pursuit of CACREP accreditation.

Maddox (below right) lives in Republic with his wife Brandie, 6-year old son Mason and 10-month old daughter Leena.



Meet Our Staff

Graduate Assistants and Interns are an integral part of our Clinic, assisting in welcoming clients, phone intakes, clinic marketing and classroom facilitation.

Pictured left to right: Charlten Henderson (Holly Grove, Arkansas); Yasuko Kanamori (Kobe, Japan); Jason Kearbey (Springfield) and Lin Wang (Rizhao, China).

Being a GA has its challenges: "It's an ongoing balance of making sure I'm giving adequate time to both my coursework and my graduate-work," says Henderson. "But it has advantages," he continues; "I have a greater awareness and access to professors and resources, and have a sense of what things look like behind the counseling session itself."

What to do with Anxiety

HELLO
my name is

Anxiety

Anxiety disorders, which include panic attacks affect millions of people in the US. Some symptoms include chronic worrying, ongoing tension, feeling wired and on-edge, irritability, difficulty sleeping, fatigue, an upset stomach and/or digestive problems.

Seeing a physician to rule out any possible causes and seeing a counselor are two ways of addressing anxiety.

Additional steps include looking to see if

there is a 'pattern' to the anxious feelings. Do they appear to be related to a certain time, activity, person or thought?

Accepting the feelings and waiting for them to pass, is another suggestion. Fighting them, say the professionals, just increases the adrenaline output.

Learning some relaxation techniques and developing a daily exercise program also help.

Where Are They Now?"

Meet Doug and Alison Gragson. The two went through the MSU Counseling program together, becoming friends, licensed counselors, coworkers, married—and now parents of baby girl, Ali born June 30.

While both say they were drawn into counseling at different points in their life (Doug says he knew when he was six, while Alison states she went through a career in the corporate world first), their paths came together in the Masters' Counseling program at Missouri State University. "We met in Counseling Foundations class," says Doug, "and then became Graduate Assistant's together.

Following graduation, the duo worked for a year at Sigma House (now Clarity House) doing substance abuse related counseling. The two had dreams then of going into private practice and were able to do that at Counseling Solutions, Springfield.

The biggest reward in being counselors, say both is being able to be a part of the process as clients make connections and grow in their lives. "There is nothing as powerful to us," says Alison "than someone finding a way to accept themselves as they are."

We wondered whether being counselors in a married relationship has its challenges: "Yes and no," laughs Doug. "The level of constructive and honest communication is very high." He goes on, "We both are very aware and supportive of each others individual process in continuing to grow.



"The challenge," continues Alison "is that there are times when we just have to consciously stop 'naval gazing' and just enjoy the moment together."

As for their newest addition, "A child wasn't on our radar when we started the Counseling program in 2008," says Doug. "Finding each other, becoming best friends and falling in love though opened a lot of doors and possibilities. The birth of our daughter and watching her grow has been a beautiful experience for both of us; one we couldn't have imagined before—and one that we cherish profoundly."

"It has become the most wonderful journey for us," they both add.

MMHF Art Exhibit back at Clinic

For the fourth year in a row, the Clinic has joined with the Missouri Mental Health Foundation in their efforts to destigmatize mental health and addiction issues through art.

The Director's Creativity Showcase is a travelling art exhibit that each year features the art of persons throughout Missouri who receive Department of Mental Health services, either through the Division of Behavioral Health or the Division

of Developmental Disabilities.

The Missouri Mental Health Foundation was founded in 2008 as a non-profit organization aimed at raising awareness and public understanding of the many issues impacting individuals and families living with mental illness, developmental disabilities and addiction disorders.

This year's exhibit was displayed in the Park Central Office Building, foyer.



Individual Play Therapy sessions available to kids, ages 2-12



Center City Counseling Clinic is a referral base for many parents seeking assistance with their children—whether they are in-crisis, or just struggling with adjustment issues.

Rebecca Smotherman, LPC, RPT and Play Therapy Institute director, oversees student work with children. Counselors are students finishing up a masters degree in mental health and/or school counseling. Play Therapy is a research-based modali-

ty of working with children who have not yet developed the verbal skills to put into words the feelings and experiences they are struggling with.

Using theme-selected toys, children are able to symbolically express and process what they aren't yet able to verbalize.

Sessions for children are held in the spring and fall semesters. For further information, call 836-3215.

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*Bringing the classroom to the community,
and the community to the classroom.*

[http://education.missouristate.edu/
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From the Director's Desk

From the Director's Desk:

In addition to the changing colors of the season, there are ongoing changes and improvements to the Counseling Program and Center City Counseling Clinic.

Our approval a year ago for CACREP accreditation has been brought about by the hard work and dedication, often unsung, by the Counseling faculty, staff, administration and graduate assistants.

Dr. Paul Maddox, (see page 2) who was educated and has taught at CACREP Counseling programs says the value can't be understated. "It helps to bring more credibility to the Counseling field," he says. "It sets standards and helps to demonstrate the competency of our (MSU) students who are graduating with a masters' degree in Counseling."

Coming back to the Clinic this next

semester are the Child-Parent Relationship Training (CPRT) classes that offer to parents and others who work or live with children, the chance to learn some of the same techniques used in play therapy counseling sessions.

The clinic's play therapy rooms are getting updated with better shelves and a change in toys to improve the theme structure so vital in assisting children in their struggles with emotions, experiences and behaviors.

Recently, CCCC teamed up with the new MSU Care program, a partnership between Mercy Hospital and the MSU College of Health and Human Services.

The MSU Care Clinic will be providing health care services similar to the way Center City Counseling Clinic does for mental health needs. Both clinics see the advantage of being able to refer clients who may wish or be in need of the others services.



Robin E. Farris, MS LPC—Clinic Director

Robin Farris, MS LPC is a 2005 graduate of the MSU Counseling Program and has been employed as Clinic director at Center City Counseling Clinic since 2007.