



## Where Are They Now?

Meet Sarah Baumgardner and David Anderson!

Former graduates of Missouri State University's Counseling Program—Class of 2009, they are both employed as school counselors for the Willard School system, and they are related: brother and sister. What are the chances of that?

For Sarah, the journey started in 2003 when she became an elementary school teacher: "I realized that my favorite part was talking and connecting with my students," she says. "That was when I realized that I wanted to go into school counseling— There's so much of that educational experience that hinges on a student's ability to feel loved and connected."



"I never thought of myself as a counselor," laughs brother David. "After six years as a special education teacher however," he says "I knew that in order to advance I was going to need to get my Masters degree." Education Administration was an option, but what David found himself drawn to instead was school counseling.

What was it like to be in classes together? "Sarah

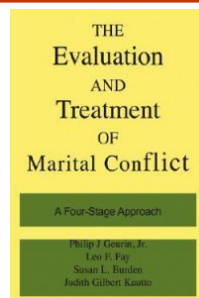
and I have a competitive nature," he grins, "but that only pushed us to be better." "He was always there to bounce ideas off of and provide honest feedback," adds Sarah.

Both agree that while challenged at times, the experience also drew them closer together.

And what do they find satisfying about their careers now? "Making a difference in the life of a kid," say Sarah and David together.

*(Sarah Baumgardner is a school counselor at Willard South Elementary. Her brother, David Anderson is a school counselor at Willard North Elementary.)*

## Book Review: The Evaluation and Treatment of Marital Conflict



First published in 1987, a team of researcher-clinicians presents information on how to match presenting problems with treatment.

In addition to discussing the major issues in most marital conflict: sex, mon-

ey, parenting and in-laws, the 274-page manuscript also introduces the added complexities of family triangles, sources of stress and how personality styles play into the conflict.

Also included, a chapter on Problems for the Therapist.

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## Retiring Branson Counselor Donates Boxes of Books to Clinic

After 30 years, eighteen of them in the Branson area, Dr. Linda Coker, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Substance Abuse specialist and Play Therapist has decided to retire. Really.

"I closed office a year ago," says Dr. Coker "and then started working with clients in-home—but now, it's time to travel."

As part of that process, Dr. Coker contributed seven boxes of books and other materials related to the therapeutic process to Center City Counseling Clinic.

Dr. Coker says she had picked up a clinic brochure "from somewhere, and well—since both my kids graduated from SMSU (now MSU) - I thought it was a logical choice," she says.

The books will be added to the clinic library which is accessed by masters students enrolled in Missouri State University's counseling program.

Looking back, Coker indicates that seeing people succeed has been the greatest satisfaction of her career. "I saw them rise above insurmountable difficulties," she commented.

Following the recent suicide death of comedian Robin Williams, Coker indicates she received a number of phone calls from past clients. "It surprised me to hear from them," she says; "but every

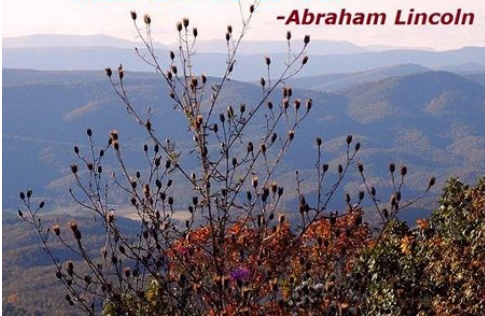
one of them said: That could have been me. Thanks for listening."

*Pictured below: Clinic director Robin Farris (left) helps Dr. Coker unload boxes of books that she recently donated to Center City Counseling Clinic.*



**Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.**

**-Abraham Lincoln**



Happiness: pleasure, contentment, satisfaction, a sense of well-being

According to a recent brochure from the Institute for Brain Potential, 50% of happiness is genetic, 40% is within our power to change and only 10% is affected by life circumstances.

Accordingly, the Institute notes that activities, thoughts and beliefs that support

positive emotions, thoughts, caring, commitment, motivation and meaning make for the "Habits of Happy People."

One commentator recently added that "Happy" songs can have a positive effect on people's emotional well-being.

"Being happy," says another "is a very personal thing and it really has nothing to do with anyone else."



## Meet Our Staff

Graduate Assistants are a valuable asset to the Clinic, assisting in day-to-day operations, faculty research projects, class instruction, and as interns, seeing clients in an advanced capacity.

Pictured left to right: **Yasuko Kanamori** (Kobe, Japan), **Chenchen Zhang** (Zheng-

Zhou, China), **Justin Cook**, **Sandy Parisi**, **Julie Flippos** and **Lauren Parish**, all of Springfield.

When not attending classes, working and studying: Yasuko enjoys reading, Chenchen watches movies, Justin bikes, Sandy paints, Julie works out and Lauren spends time outdoors.

Sandy, Julie and Lauren are expected to graduate in December of this year.

## Clinic Welcomes New Counseling Staff



Center City Counseling Clinic welcomes Rebecca Smotherman, MS, PSC, LPC, RPT (*left*) and Amy Chenoweth, MS, LPC, LCSW (*below right*) to the MSU Counseling program team.

The two instruct masters level students who are aspiring to be Mental Health and School-based counselors.

Ms. Smotherman is well-known to many school counselors in the area,

having been employed herself as one in Cabool's middle school for the past seven years, and at Summersville for the year preceding.

Prior to her counseling experience, Ms. Smotherman worked in education starting as a paraprofessional and teacher's assistant and then as a classroom teacher.

In addition to that and private practice careers, she has served on the Governing Board of the Missouri Association for Play Therapy.

Ms. Chenoweth graduated from MSU (then SMSU) in 1987 with a

Masters in counseling, and has taught off and on as a per course instructor in psychology at both OTC and Drury. She has been in private practice here in Springfield as a counselor since 1995.

She has been employed and is passionate about her work with Head Start and has presented a number of workshops on the importance of early childhood education.

When not working, Ms. Smotherman enjoys her family, camping, crafting and reading among others; Ms. Chenoweth takes pride in her son who recently graduated from MSU himself.

"Seeing people realize their strengths, through the counseling process is something I appreciate," says Chenoweth. "The strength of the human spirit is amazing to me—always."



## Fall Workshops: Family Therapy and Couples Communication

On Friday, Oct 10, 2014 the Clinic will again sponsor continuing education workshops for area mental health professionals, school counselors, social workers and others interested.

"Couples Communication: How we Connect and What to Do when we Don't" is being presented by Dr. Libby Bennett, Springfield clinical psychologist and certified sex therapist.

Back by popular demand "Solution-Focused Family Counseling" by MSU Counseling professor, Dr. Joseph Hulgus.

Both workshops reached capacity in early September and will be held at the Park Central Office Building, located on



the corner of South and McDaniel in downtown Springfield.

The Spring 2015 workshops, scheduled for April, will feature topics on Domestic Violence (Tara Forrester-Ruble) and Transgender persons and issues (Josh Castillo).

## 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 modality 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.

Anyone interested may call 836-3215 for further information.

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

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## From the Director's Desk



*Robin E. Farris, MS LPC—Clinic Director*

### *From the Director's Desk:*

One of the rewarding aspects of marketing for the Clinic, is running into the many persons now employed in schools

and community counseling and social work, who were once students of the University's Counseling program.

While visiting at Willard's elementary schools recently I ran into two who not only worked in the same school system and went through counseling classes together, but were related. (See first page.)

That started a whole idea of a column for this newsletter: "Where Are They Now?" How did the people now assisting kids, couples, families and individual adults in so many capacities decide on Counseling as a career, and where did they end up? What have they found to be the thing that brings them the most satisfaction at the end of the day?

In two articles of this newsletter, the answer was the same, both from those recently in the field (five years: David

Anderson and Sarah Baumgardner) and those who are retiring after many years (Dr. Laura Coker): it's the difference that doing what they do makes in people's lives.

Sometimes a career moves off and ends in the same path that it started, and other times (as so many of us can attest), the path meanders and we may embrace multiple journeys along life's highway. Blanket or patchwork quilt, here's hoping that all of our readers are, or have been fulfilled in their life's work.

Stay tuned in future issues for other Counseling graduates who 'followed their passion and found their place.'

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*robin*