Warner Helps Establish Counseling Profession in Bhutan

Intrigued by the culture, values, and cultural commitment to happiness, Warner School of Education Professors Mary Rapp and Howard Kirschenbaum embarked on a journey last fall to a country that, until recently, has isolated itself from the rest of the fast-paced modern world.

Bhutan is a small, landlocked Himalayan country in South Asia that for the past century has tried to preserve its traditional culture and heritage. Today, conditions in Bhutan are very different from what they were prior to the early 1960’s. There were no public hospitals, schools, paper currency, roads or electricity, and no diplomatic relations until several years after that.

“It was one of the least developed countries in the world,” explains Rapp, who directs the K-12 school leadership preparation program at Warner.

The leaders of Bhutan, who hope to preserve their Buddhist values as the country modernizes and becomes a part of the global community, are very concerned about the wellness of their citizens and have determined that the profession of counseling should be established in maximizing people’s happiness. Bhutanese leaders are now eager to learn more about counseling and apply it to a rapidly modernizing Asian culture committed to gross national happiness.

“When the country opened its borders, the Bhutanese were very particular and careful in the decisions they made about whom to
Counseling in Bhutan

Welcome into their country," adds Rapp, "because they are so committed to maintaining their traditional culture. Volunteers can only enter if their work matches the country's mission and Buddhist values."

Rapp and Kirschenbaum, who are married, were part of the Bhutan Counseling Institute, a select team of 12 counselors and counselor educators invited by the Government of Bhutan to assist them in developing a counseling profession. The institute, hosted by the National Board of Certified Counselors and Old Dominion University, provided counseling services to Bhutan schools, hospitals, social agencies, and universities for a three-week period last October. Rapp and Kirschenbaum, along with two other professionals, focused their time and energy on shaping the counseling profession in K-12 schools.

When Rapp and Kirschenbaum arrived in Bhutan, they found that the people welcomed them into their lives completely.

"When I visited the primary school for the first time and the principal introduced me to the 855 children, she said, 'I want you to welcome Professor Mary into the family of our school and I ask that you pray for her and all the work she will do with us and pray for her family, too,'" says Rapp, who spent the bulk of her time at Jigme Losel Primary School.

"It was a very personal feeling of warmth that we received from the people, as well as the opportunity to feel like we could share some of the things that we had learned over the course of our careers."

Upon arrival, both Rapp and Kirschenbaum also witnessed how much the counseling field was just beginning. According to Kirschenbaum, there were only two dozen counselors that had significant training and two psychiatrists in the entire country, and there were no social workers or clinical psychologists.

"The field of mental health counseling is just beginning so they were open to everything we had to offer, whether it was information about human growth and development, particular counseling skills, or integrating counseling programs into the schools," says Kirschenbaum, professor emeritus who chaired Warner's counseling and human development program. "They were eager to learn as much as they could about how counseling works and how it could be adapted into their own particular culture and values in Bhutan. It was not that they were without resources for helping people with mental health issues, but they did not have a profession of mental health as we would think of it in the west."

As the country began to modernize, people also witnessed how much the counseling field was just beginning. According to Kirschenbaum, most students did not enter if their work matches the country's mission and Buddhist values. A counseling program. He created a schedule looking at different options—like psychiatry, clinical psychology, and clinical social work—they chose mental health counseling because it embodies values that focus on prevention and wellness that are consistent with the country's value of gross national happiness.

"Bhutan like other countries has issues with mental health," Kirschenbaum explains. "There's growing alcoholism and substance abuse, domestic violence, and stress among school students due to peer pressure and high stakes testing. There's also depression and anxiety, so Bhutan is no different than other countries, and helping professionals are going to be very useful and critical in Bhutan to help meet those needs."

During the first two weeks of the three-week institute, most participants provided direct counseling services to the citizens of Bhutan in the capital city of Thimphu. Participants were assigned to a school or college, hospital, or social agency, depending on the expertise and interests of the participants.

Most of Rapp's time was spent at Jigme Losel Primary School, a school that has been well-known for its ability to embody Buddhist values. Children here attend school five-and-a-half days a week, which includes Saturday mornings, and the class size averages 45 students.

Rapp, the former assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction at the Penfield Central School District, focused on two issues. One was to support the introduction of counselors into the school. The second was to help teachers understand social and emotional health and how it might help children in their school learning.

She adapted teachers’ lessons to utilize the content for decision making and problem solving—specifc outcomes identified by the Ministry of Education. During the lessons, Rapp also engaged the children in active learning strategies that were new to the school. Soon, she was responding to numerous requests to demonstrate those techniques throughout the grades.

Rapp reflects back to a hand washing lesson she taught. While creating and learning about graphs, fifth-graders were able to conclude that those who washed their hands the most missed the least amount of school. The lesson was a part of a UNESCO project entitled, "Hand Washing—A Daily Ritual," which culminated in a skit in which the students acted out the germs, healthy children, and sick children.

Rapp also demonstrated ways that counselors can be helpful. For example, at a forum for parents, she had the opportunity to raise a question about disciplining children that the school principal and a visiting lama used to address current parenting practices.

She says, "That's the kind of role that a counselor plays in the school—interaction with parents, helping them to develop more effective ways of interacting with their children. They had not previously had the help of a counselor to work with parents in this way, so I was able to model that a bit."

Across town at Yangchenphu Upper Secondary School, Kirschenbaum worked with teacher counselors and the school principal to develop a counseling program. He created a schedule continued on back page

Continued from front page

Clockwise from top: (1) The Himalayan Mountains as seen from the plane between Delhi, India and Bhutan; (2) Some Bhutanese children at the tsechu (cultural/religious celebrations); (3) The tsechu where dancers are dancing storms and events from the nation’s and religion’s history; (4) 3,100 students at Yangchenphu Upper Secondary School (9th-12th grade) at morning assembly—for prayer, meditation, announcements, and a values or moral lesson offered by a different student each day. Kirschenbaum worked with the students, counselors, teachers and administrators at this school for two weeks.

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Maureen Elliott smiles as she remembers solving the mystery of what was on the bottom of the block—a lesson, she says, that taught her how to encourage students to answer questions and solve problems on their own. The Aquinas Institute tenth-grader was one of two dozen local students participating in the Exploring Teaching and Other Education Careers Program this past fall. Launched in 2010, the program is offered by the Warner School of Education, in conjunction with the Seneca Waterways Council of the Boy Scouts of America, to Monroe County area high school students interested in careers in K-12 schools. After having been through the ten fall sessions, which meet once a week for 90 minutes in the evening at the University of Rochester, her views of what a good teacher is have broadened.

"A good teacher is someone who understands the student and shows compassion," she adds, "someone who uses different teaching methods, and someone who is relatable to students. A good teacher is someone whom students feel comfortable around without losing respect for him or her."

According to Oliver Cashman-Brown, a doctoral student at Warner who directs the Exploring Teaching and Other Education Careers Program, the program gives students an inside view of what it is like to be a teacher and what it means to create curricula. He says the program also helps students to think about teaching and learning in a different way.

"In order to have students understand what teaching is like, we want them to understand what learning is. Once students started to see how to incorporate all these different learning styles into creating a lesson plan that makes sure every student is successful," he adds. "I now realize that my learning style may not be the same as the person next to me in class," says Elliott. "I have known that there are different styles of learning, but I now know how much complicated being a teacher is and what teachers do to support such a process. I also long term as they think about how complicated being a teacher is and what teachers do to meet those complications," she adds.

"Some days we took notes, while other days we got out of our seats and interacted with another," she adds. "It showed me that what they were teaching us is possible and can be successful." For more information about the Exploring Teaching and Other Education Careers Program, please contact Oliver Cashman-Brown at (585) 208-3032 or by e-mail at oliver.cashman-brown@warner.rochester.edu.

Program Allows Teens to Explore Career Options in Education

"In order to have students understand what teaching is like, we want them to understand what learning is like." Oliver Cashman-Brown

Elliott, who hopes to someday become an English or special education teacher, always thought of a good teacher as someone who teaches and makes sure students receive good grades. After having been through the ten fall sessions, which meet once a week for 90 minutes in the evening at the University of Rochester, her views of what a good teacher is have broadened.

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"In order to have students understand what teaching is like, we want them to understand what learning is like." says Cashman-Brown, who taught social studies in California and New York for five years prior to coming to Warner. "One way we try to do this is by broadening their experiences as learners and exposing them to different approaches to learning. We try to help them become more cognizant of the teaching and learning experience."

Cashman-Brown and Marcy Berger, also a PhD student at Warner who helped design the program and facilitate sessions this past fall and will run the program this year, brought students through several exercises on learning theory and helped them to think about what learning is. Once students started to understand what learning is, they then had the opportunity to develop their own lesson plans and create their own imaginary schools.

"These are all students who are interested in becoming teachers and who are encountering new ways of thinking about learning and teaching, which immediately helps them in their studies as students in their schools and also long term as they think about how complicated being a teacher is and what teachers do to meet those complications," he adds.

For Samantha Broking, a Fairport junior who aspires to become a high school math or special education teacher, that view into the teaching profession was exactly what she needed.
Hursh and his team at the Earth Institute are trying to create school-university models that can be reproduced in other developing countries to improve the national curriculum and overall quality of education for children. “Doing work and connecting universities with schools and developing models for the country could make the change, and that’s what the Earth Institute gives me a chance to do,” he adds. “It allows me the opportunity to develop models that can make an impact and that can be replicated and influence other models.”

With Uganda and Kenya being neighboring countries, Hursh will focus on these two areas initially. Simultaneously, he will focus on making new connections and forming school-university partnerships in other sub-Saharan African countries so that these models can eventually be carried over into new countries as well.

**Classroom Technology**

In addition to improving the national curriculum, the Project aims to tap into the power of technology to ensure that schools in developing countries have access to the best teaching and research resources available.

In his recent endeavor to Kenya and Uganda, Hursh met with faculty from the University of Nairobi and Kampa University to discuss ways to support the Project, and ultimately improve the quality of education at schools, through the use of technology.

One way to accomplish this, he says, is to use technology in creative and thoughtful ways to help teachers implement a curriculum on environmental sustainability.

“Besides using technology to access the Internet and other resources, we want schools to connect with other schools in Africa and around the world,” explains Hursh, who has developed a partnership with the Center to Learn Project, an Earth Institute initiative that receives support from Ericsson Technology and uses information and Communication Technology (ICT) to connect classrooms and improve access to quality educational resources around the world. “We’re trying to get people to use new technologies to communicate beyond their classroom, so we should also be doing this at the university level—communicating both with the schools and with other universities.”

According to Hursh, both of the universities he is working with in Africa are eager to learn how to best implement technology in K-12 schools and collaborate on improving pre-service and in-service teacher education through the use of technology and more innovative online curriculum resources.

Hursh’s plans also entail getting K-12 schools and universities to do collaborative action research to assess the implementation of technology in schools as a way to identify what the needs are, what teachers know about computers, and best practices for teacher training around technology.

**Community Connection**

The Millennium Villages Project’s efforts extend beyond classroom walls to improving the overall community. In addition to creating and promoting new ways of learning in schools, Hursh is trying to pinpoint new ways of learning in the community.

He hopes to change what goes on in schools so that it connects with the community and helps to accomplish all of the goals of the Millennium Villages Project—not just the goals of the education sector, but the goals of substantially improving the lives of people in the country.

“It’s not just about changing the curricula in schools,” Hursh says. “It’s trying to figure out how to connect schools with the community, so that local people who have expertise around health, solar, electric systems, and energy, or harvesting systems can lend their knowledge to schools. These experts and teachers can then integrate what they know into the curriculum, and at the same time students can produce work that can share with the community.”

One example of this may be having children educate the community about the health dangers of smoke inhalation when cooking over wood fire.

“We need to rethink what schools do and their role in the community, and we need support from the community,” he adds. “Education can occur both formally in schools and informally in the community, so it’s trying to figure out what that looks like.”

So far, he’s been successful at helping others to understand the value of collaborating on curriculum around environmental health and environmental sustainability that will not only improve the quality of education in K-12 schools but also in the research universities that are creating useful knowledge for schools and the community.

Hursh and his team at the Earth Institute are trying to create school-university models that can be reproduced in other developing countries to improve the national curriculum and overall quality of education for children. "Doing work and connecting universities with schools and developing models for the country could make the change, and that's what the Earth Institute gives me a chance to do," he adds. "It allows me the opportunity to develop models that can make an impact and that can be replicated and influence other models."
Taking New Common Core Math Standards to the Classroom

With New York State’s adoption of the Common Core Mathematics Standards, the Warner Center for Professional Development and Education Reform at the Warner School of Education has already differentiated itself by getting ahead of the curve with helping local teachers and administrators prepare for, and begin to implement, these new standards.

The standards, developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and National Governors Association (NGA) in consultation with teachers, parents, experts, and school administrators from across the country, have been adopted by almost every state and school administrators from across the country, have been adopted by almost every state and school administrators from across the country, have been adopted by almost every state and school administrators from across the country, have been adopted by almost every state and school administrators from across the country. Formerly, each state had its own set of standards and the national focus on the Common Core Math Standards, explains Callard, has put an end to the ‘Math Wars’—the debate over what and how mathematics should be taught. “The Common Core emphasizes both conceptual understanding and fluency with basic facts and skills,” she says.

“This is more complex and deeper than the previous New York State standards, which was a checklist of very small ideas focused on procedural skills,” says Cindy Callard, director of mathematics outreach in the Warner Center who also teaches middle school mathematics in the Brighton Central School District. “The Common Core is much more focused on big ideas and conceptual understanding, in addition to procedure, while making connections to the real world.”

Perseverence, problem solving, reasoning, conceptual understanding, and making connections to the real world are just some of the skills that K-12 students will master under the new Common Core Mathematics Standards. These standards will challenge students to develop both understandings as well as procedural fluency. Students also will be asked to apply this knowledge to novel situations and not just repeat a procedure that was learned.

The national focus on the Common Core Standards, explains Callard, has put an end to the ‘Math Wars’—the debate over what and how mathematics should be taught. “The Common Core emphasizes both conceptual understanding and fluency with basic facts and skills,” she says.

Traditional math instruction built around memorization and repetition—still a norm in many of the nation’s schools—will get a makeover under the new Common Core Math Standards.

The Warner Center has been involved with the Common Core Standards since 2009 when the first drafts were released by the U.S. Department of Education and feedback was needed. “We have been working at multiple levels,” Callard adds. “We try to impact what’s happening nationally by providing feedback and advocating for teachers, impacting and engaging in state-wide implementation, and supporting school districts on the ground locally.”

With connections at the regional, state, and national levels, the Warner Center is prepared to make the Common Core Math Standards happen in classrooms. The Center is working with multiple districts across the region to influence how teachers spend their time and resources and provide professional development for teachers and administrators to engage in, and better understand the Common Core so that when they have to implement it, they have already done some of the groundwork.

Callard and other facilitators of the Warner Center are leading professional development sessions that provide support to building an understanding of Common Core content and practices as well as keeping educators informed of developments and resources available at the state and national levels. Most recently, the Warner Center developed a course called Digging Deeper Into the Mathematics of the Common Core, a full-week institute for regional K-12 teachers and administrators.

The Warner Center professional development providers continue to create new learning opportunities and to partner with local districts and admin- istrators through the creation of new work-shops that focus on the content and practices of the Common Core as well as providing in-classroom support for several local districts. The mathematics outreach division is working with the executive director of mathematics in the Rochester City School District to develop a cadre of more than 30 teacher leaders who will stay on top of the latest news and informa-

The rollout of the Common Core Math Standards coincides with the most recent results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) that show that New York fourth- and eighth-grade students fare worse on these national assessments than the rest of the country and at a time when the nation as a whole continues to fall further behind the rest of the world in math. Results from the national math exam released earlier in November illustrate that New York math scores fall below the national average, with only 36 percent of fourth-graders proficient in math, down from 40 percent two years ago, and 30 percent of eighth-graders proficient in math, down from 34 percent two years ago.

According to Calland and Fonzi, we can no longer do business as usual and accept the same dismal results. The new standards provide an opportunity to improve mathematics instruction for all students.

“Our classrooms will need to become more engaging,” says Stephanie Martin, the mathematics outreach coordinator at the Warner Center. “Teachers will need to dig deeper in math and be able to facilitate classroom discussions—as opposed to being the one speaking all of the time—and kids will need to engage in more conversations with each other. Often times when we work with students in the classroom and approach instruction from a problem-solving and understanding perspective, students who previously disliked math now love class because they are being asked challenging questions and are encouraged to think through and answer questions on their own, rather than being told how to find the answer.”

For the past decade, the Warner Center has been helping others to think about mathematics instruction based on the research of how people learn and how to rectify weak instruction, as well as what it takes to engage students in a high-quality math program. The Center has the resources and prior experiences with high-quality curriculum that will help to successfully implement the Common Core Standards. Districts that have collaborated with the Warner Center in the past will understand the benefits of having begun the foundational work because the new national standards are in line with the type of work the Center has been doing with teachers for years. Similarly, gradu- ate students enrolled in the Warner School’s mathematics teacher education program also will be prepared to enter schools as new teach- ers and teach to the new national standards.

“These are national standards and they are here to stay,” adds Fonzi, “and we have a chance to do it right. This is an exciting time for mathematics instruction and we owe this to our children.”

To learn more about the Warner Center or for more information on the resources available for the new Common Core Math Standards in New York State, visit www.warner.rochester.edu/warnercenter or contact Stephanie Martin at smartin@warner.rochester.edu.

Cindy Callard in her mathematics classroom at Brighton Central School District

Above: Judi Fonzi

Below: Stephanie Martin
Quiliones Presents Paper with Thomas, Begins Term as NCSS CUFA Program Chair
Kevin Meuwissen, assistant professor, and doctoral student Andrew Meuwissen, assistant professor, and Stephanie Waterman, assistant professor, along with colleagues Sam Museus of the University of Hawaii, co-wrote the book chapter “Moving from Cultures of Individualism to Cultures of Collectivism to Serve College Students of Color” in Creating Campus Cultures: Fostering Success among Racially Diverse Student Populations (Routledge, 2011).

Quiliones was invited to speak at the Earth Institute in February. The title of his talk was “Ideal and Actual Self-Concept in Three Countries: China, Russia, and the United States.”

Hursh Presents at United Nations
Martin Hursh, associate professor, was invited as a keynote speaker at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Conference on Education for All in 2012. Hursh’s paper, “The Impact of Values on Education,” focused on cultural and linguistic diversity and culturally responsive writing strategies with English language learners and emergent bilinguals. Quiliones led the class in a mindful “tree” writing activity and shared some of her writing with the students. Using her own writing as a starting point, the class discussed strategies focused on bilingual-bicultural identity and biliteracy development.

Donna Harris, assistant professor, was the guest editor for the March 2012 special issue of Education and Urban Society, themed “Are We There Yet? An Examination of Educational Equity in the Era of School Reform and Accountability.” In addition to her role as editor, Harris contributed the article “Varying Teacher Expectations and Standards: Curriculum Differentiation in the Age of Standard-Based Reform,” and the postscript “Urban Schools, Accountability, and Equity: Insights Regarding NCLB and Reform.” In her postscript, Harris considers the struggles urban schools report confronting as they implement standards-based reform and high-stakes testing and discusses the implications these challenges have for future accountability policy aimed at promoting education equity.

“Employment Searches” was co-edited by alumnae Kelly Ludovici ’11 (MS), a school counseling graduate, and Amy Baum ’11 (MS), a mental health counseling graduate. Ludovici and Baum gave a thorough presentation ranging from useful employment websites and preparation of resumes to informational interviewing and networking. The sharing of their experiences, as well as those of other alumni as they looked for employment, was very helpful to all who attended.

Two members of the Warner School community will have new titles beginning this summer after a search to fill clinical positions in human development and literacy education, ensuring their ongoing presence at Warner and work with students on projects.

Joyce Duckles, a Warner doctoral student in human development, teaches courses in human development theories, family and social dynamics, entrepreneurial skills for educators, and qualitative research methods. A child development expert, she focuses her own research on early science learning at home, how young children “do science,” and the unique “co-constructing” that takes place when parents and children explore science together. Duckles also has worked along with the Department of Community and Preventive Medicine to conduct ethnographic research on childhood obesity and family health practices.

Carol St. George currently directs the literacy teacher education program at the Warner School. She also teaches courses in teaching and curriculum related to theory and practice for reading professionals. A veteran educator, she brings extensive experience as a teacher, ranging from preschool to graduate school. St. George’s research examines how teachers can most effectively collaborate with families to support student literacy and learning. She works directly with teachers as part of a mentorship program that addresses literacy issues. In this mentorship role, she provides strategic intervention and support for improving literacy instruction and skills among city students.

Warner Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota Sponsors Counseling Professional Development Series
Upson Rho Iota (URI), the Warner chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, the international honor society in counseling, sponsored three professional development sessions in January and February. The programs were open to all current students in the school counseling and mental health counseling programs, as well as students in these programs at The College at Brockport State University of New York.

“Taking Standardized Tests and the NCE” led by doctoral student Elainse Casquarelli, included tips for taking standardized tests, information about study guides, and professional reasons for taking the national counselor examination (NCE), including inter-state portability of the credential.

“Family Involvement in Early Literacy: Can Schools and Families Work Together?” was presented by Warner doctoral student in human development, ensuring their ongoing presence at Warner and work with students on projects.
Counseling in Bhutan  continued from page 3

that allowed time for group counseling and individual counseling for the teacher counselors to work in career development to implement a peer counseling program. Additionally, he worked with the school administration to build an infrastructure for counseling—including a peer helper program, afterschool counselors, release time for teacher-counselors, and private space for counseling—and held workshops to introduce students and teachers to the concept of counseling. For example, he covered what type of issues one can go to a school counselor with and how the counseling process works.

The workshops, according to Kirschenbaum, helped students to see that going to a school counselor does not have a stigma attached to it.

At the end of a student workshop, he says, one student wrote and read aloud, “This session on school counseling has helped us to understand how we, the students, can overcome the problems that we face. We all have issues, so thank you for making us feel that we are not alone and that there is help and support available. Now we understand the role that counselors play in life.”

Kirschenbaum adds, “It was gratifying to work that closely with young people in Bhutan. By the time I had left the school after two weeks, I felt that things had really begun to change in terms of the school now wanting to implement some of the goals that they themselves had, but didn’t quite know how to put into practice.”

The trip to Bhutan has had a tremendous impact on the Warner School professors, both personally and professionally.

In addition to the work of counseling education, Kirschenbaum has a lifelong interest in values education, which is now being played out on a national scale in Bhutan. For several decades, he has been writing and teaching about an approach called “comprehensive values education,” whereby adults in society—whether formally in schools or informally in parenting or youth groups—try to help young people develop values that are consistent with the best values of the culture, family, and religion while at the same time learn the life skills to make their own decisions and develop their own values.

“In Bhutan, they are experimenting with a program by which they are trying to instill the traditional Buddhist values, but also have the explicit goal of teaching young people life skills, including decision making, creativity, self-awareness, and other skills that help develop people’s individuality,” he says. “Bhutan was a fascinating laboratory in which they are trying to balance traditional values education with progressive values education. I would like to return to continue studying and working with the Bhutanese in trying to resolve the longstanding conflict in the field of values education of how to both provide traditional values education and help young people develop their own identities.”

The trip, says Rapp, gave her first-hand experience in working closely with people from another culture, and understanding how important it is to welcome people from other cultures into our schools. “It helped me to understand their values and previous experiences and feel part of a multicultural community,” she adds.

For Rapp and Kirschenbaum, the way this trip has changed them is not over. Both hope to return in a year to build on and continue their work in building the counseling profession.

“We felt so privileged to be included in the life of the school, families and their celebrations,” concludes Kirschenbaum with a smile. “It was an incredibly gratifying personal and professional experience.”

Visit www.warner.rochester.edu/newsevents/story/903 to view additional photos taken by Rapp and Kirschenbaum, as well as a brief video overview of their trip.