

San Jose Campus
Alumni Newsletter

The Western FRONT

November 2013

where the gospel meets the world



Counseling Outside of the Box and in the Trenches

By Bree (Grant) Bode, LMFT -
MA Marital and Family Therapy,
Class of 2006

I began my journey as a Marriage and Family Therapist student at Western Seminary having no idea where it would take me, what people and situations I would encounter, or how much God was going to teach me about His grace and myself.

As a trainee, I was placed in a secular counseling program at Youth Services—part of the Santa Cruz Community Counseling Center—in Watsonville, CA. The program, *Escuela Quetzal* (EQ), was

no ordinary counseling program. EQ was a drug and alcohol program and clean & sober high school. It wasn't your traditional "50-minute hour" counseling sessions, rather "outside of the box" counseling in some fairly non-traditional locations (in the car, on a bench at lunchtime, on a white water rafting trip, on the sidewalk outside the office after determining if it was safe for a client to walk home). My clinical supervisor warned me that it was a notoriously challenging placement because the population consisted primarily of adolescent, drug

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IMPORTANT DATES

Western Seminary will be closed:

Nov. 28 - Dec. 1 Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 24-25 Christmas
Jan. 1, 2014 New Year's Day
Jan. 20, 2014 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

NOVEMBER 11

Veterans Day - Remember those who've sacrificed for and served our country.

JANUARY 8, 2014

Discover Coaching, 7:00pm-9:00pm,
RSVP by January 2.

JANUARY 15, 2014

Discover Coaching Webinar, begins at 8am

Other [Community Calendar](#) dates

Audit a Free Class!

Alumni can take one eligible course per academic year free as an audit course, including Introduction to Coaching (MCS 510). You need only complete a [Non-Credit Application](#) form and the [Alumni Audit Opportunity](#) form and submit them to [Carrie Priest](#), Director of Student Services. Contact her at 408.356.6889 x405 or carriepriest@westernseminary.edu to find out which courses are available to audit.

"COUNSELING OUTSIDE OF THE BOX AND IN THE TRENCHES" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

addicted gang members from rival Latino gangs. I remember hesitantly thinking, "How am I, a white, middle-class, 20-something female going to be able to connect with primarily male, Latino, adolescent, drug addicted gang members?"

I had to quickly learn the ins and outs of gang and drug culture in order to keep both the clients and myself safe. I learned the subtle nuances of certain whistles that indicated trouble, gang music that boomed from the cars that drove by, and letters and numbers that represented the various gangs throughout the city. I never wore red or blue to work. I prayed everyday to be protected and clothed with the Armor of God. Most days I felt like I was driving into battle in the trenches. It was a battle for the client's sobriety, healing, and ultimately their lives.

God taught me that I did not need to pretend to be something I was not in that environment. My story, experiences, and culture were polar opposites of these youth and that

was okay. God simply called me to show up everyday to be a firm yet loving and gracious presence in the lives of these young men and women. He opened my eyes to see them as someone's child, God's children, instead of gang members and addicts and oppositional-defiant teens. This is what helped me connect. When the going got tough—and boy did it get tough—the Spirit gave me the strength to be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, gentle and to model self-control. I had to come to terms with the possibility that all I was doing at EQ was seed planting. The "a-ha" moments were few and far between, relapses were prevalent, unhealthy choices were still made, arrests happened weekly, and the violence didn't stop. But, God is good. I have faith that the seeds that were planted will be watered and grow and produce fruit. God loves these young men and women far more than I, or any other therapist, ever could.

I ended up staying at EQ for seven years before transferring to my current role as an outpatient therapist in another Youth Services program. It was seven years of ups

and downs, joys and sorrows, successes and failures, and spiritual and therapeutic growth. God used this group of adolescent, drug-addicted gang members that I never, ever, in a million years, thought I would be able to connect with to teach me incredible things about His grace and power in my weakness.

When I married my husband Bryan in January 2012, God began to reveal how our ministry and my career as a therapist would grow to encompass a whole new group of people: Navy sailors and their families. Bryan is a current student at Western Seminary and a Chaplain Candidate in the United States Navy. God willing, we will one day be a military chaplain family and my knowledge and skills as a therapist can be put to use serving those who serve our country. As we begin this journey I find myself having some of the same hesitations I had when I was first placed at EQ, but I trust that God has something amazing to teach me through the process. He always does.

Donelyn Miller Celebrates 20 Years of Teaching!

If you weren't able to make it on July 20 to celebrate Donelyn Miller's 20 years of teaching at Western Seminary, here is a recap: about 60 Western alumni, friends, staff and faculty gathered at Calvary Church to honor Donelyn Miller. Joni Yee (Class of '09) led us in a time of worship. Western alumni, Lisa Shrewsbury (Class of '12), Lee Cowan (Class of '11), Winnis Chiang (Class of '98) and Gary Quan (Class of '08) gave tributes to Donelyn. Dr. Judith Needham-Penrose, MFT Director of the San Jose campus, said a few words as well and presented Donelyn and her husband, Curt, with gifts on behalf of Western Seminary, including a plaque (pictured). There was time to mingle and fellowship over appetizers and dessert. Thank you everyone who came to honor her on this special day!



Left: The Certificate of Appreciation that Donelyn Miller was presented for her 20 years of service to Western Seminary. Top left: Donelyn received a Western sweatshirt at her anniversary celebration. Top right: Donelyn a couple of years after she began teaching at Western Seminary.

Thankful for You Year-Round

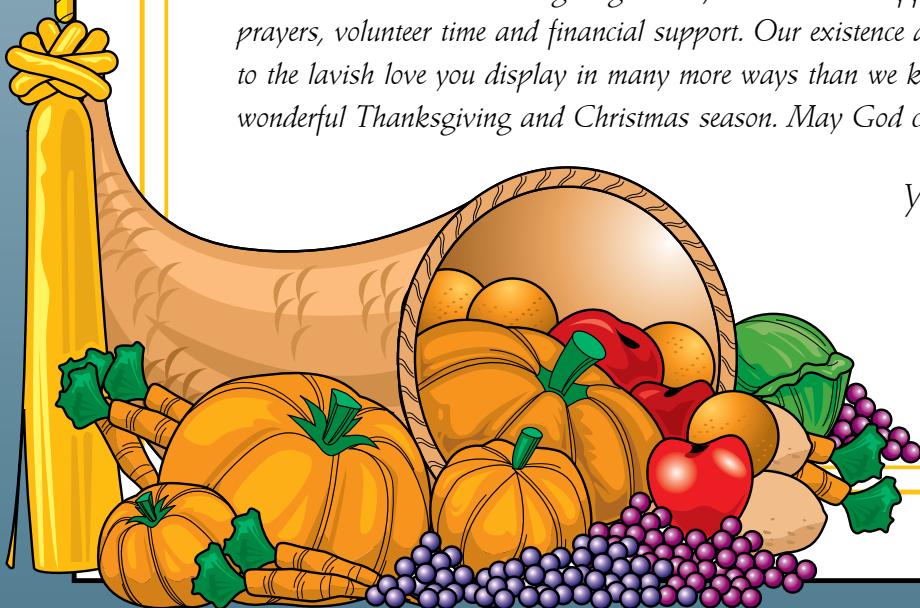
By Charmaine Williams

Recently a close neighborhood friend in his eighties approached me to share how thoughtful it was to receive a handwritten thank you note from my daughter for a gift they had given to her. I casually responded with a kind of matter-of-fact gesture indicating that it was to be expected. Then he reiterated his previous remarks stating how rare it is for people to take time and express their thoughts of thankfulness on paper. It then sort of struck me — people are constantly on the run. Sometimes a verbal thank you, quick email or text is the preferred style of communication these days. Still, there is something about spending the time to gather your thoughts and write from the heart that will forever etch one's sentiments into the soul of another human being.

I wish I had the time to personally write each one of you and share how your life has touched us here at Western. By the grace of God many of you have stood in the gap for our students so that they may continue their seminary education. You are a beacon of hope in a land where often darkness looms in the lives of those in our family, neighborhood, churches, and communities at large. You are an encouragement to those searching for answers. Hope is found in Jesus Christ who redeems people from darkness and hopelessness into the marvelous light. We thank God for the power of His Spirit that resides in each of you. The book of Ephesians identifies you as His masterpiece created in Christ Jesus to do good works which He has prepared in advance for you to do.

As we celebrate this Thanksgiving season, our hearts are appreciative of your kindness, prayers, volunteer time and financial support. Our existence at this location is a testament to the lavish love you display in many more ways than we know or acknowledge. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas season. May God continue to richly bless you!

Your Western Seminary Family



On the Frontlines with Western

*By Dan Ruiz
Executive Dean, San Jose*

I recently had the pleasure of meeting a prospective student who had stopped by my office as part of his overall tour of the campus. I learned from this person that he had heard about Western Seminary, San Jose from a former graduate. I gave him a high-five slap of the hand and expressed how our alumni represent the frontlines in our efforts to get the word out about our school. True, the seminary does market itself through print and media advertising, but such promotion is costly and thus represents a limited portion of the marketing efforts. The fact is, we rely on word of mouth advertising from our graduates, students and friends of the seminary. To a large extent, alums of the seminary play a pivotal role in recruiting new students. For this, I am grateful.

The sense of community at our campus is an essential part of the distinctiveness of Western Seminary. You as alumni are key members of that community and thus it should be no surprise that you are a major influence upon prospective students. Whether it is referring someone to Western Seminary, giving of financial resources, attending an alumni gathering, or responding to a call for

volunteers at one of our many events, please don't underestimate the role you play in promoting the San Jose campus to the community at large. The personal stories you share with prospective students and your promotion of our campus to those interested in graduate level theological learning are appreciated.

Who are the Western Seminary alumni? They are the men and women of the past twenty-seven graduating classes that make up the strategic frontlines in our efforts to reach the world for Christ. I encourage you to take a few moments to reflect on the time when the Lord led you to this campus and to marvel with praise for what He has done in your life and the lives of others as a result of being a part of these frontlines, both as students and now as alumni in supporting this campus. With God's help and continued community engagement from alumni, the seminary stands ready as a place that serves as a catalyst and resource for spiritual transformation by providing, with and for the church, advanced training for strategic ministry roles.

Thank you Western Seminary, San Jose alumni, for the many ways you invest in promoting our small corner of the world for all things kingdom outreach.

MINISTRY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We receive regular contact from churches and para-church organizations. Please see the Ministry and Employment Opportunities and Counseling binders in the front lobby for recent posting:

Enrollment Counselor (20 hrs./wk.)
[Western Seminary](#) San Jose. Contact [Jenna Ross](#). Application deadline - Nov. 15.

Pastoral Internship (part-time, unpaid)
[Crossroads Bible Church](#) in San Jose
 Cover letter/resume to [Michelle Kwong](#).

Youth Group Leader
[Faith in Grace Church](#) (a Chinese church) in Los Altos. Contact Sang Samuel Wang at sangjanet.wang@gmail.com

"Nest" Residential Counselor (Night Shift)
[Freedom House](#) in Campbell
info@freedomhouseSF.org

A "Nest" Teacher (part-time)
[Freedom House](#) in Campbell
info@freedomhouseSF.org

SPRING 2014 PERSPECTIVES CLASSES
 Perspectives Spring 2014 classes will be held on Mondays at Westgate Church (theater) in San Jose from January 27 to June 2, 2014 from 6:15-9:15pm. [Register](#) for a free informational meeting on January 13 at 6:15pm. More info about Perspectives can be found [here](#). For additional questions, contact [Marc Deredinger](#) or (408) 475-8219.

Two Ways to Give Back to Western Seminary...

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and Western receives 15% of the proceeds

AND

Purchase Amazon Products

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For alumni news, the Western Front, and additional community events -
www.westernseminary.edu/alumni/sanjose
 (click on the "San Jose" button)

For Western Seminary San Jose campus news -
www.westernseminary.edu/students/sanjose