



Focus on NDCA

WHAT'S INSIDE

[New Beginnings](#)

[Calling All Nominators](#)

[Pre-Conference in Bismarck](#)

[Divisional Grant Policies](#)

[2015 NDCA Conference](#)

[Attention Students -
NDCA Scholarship](#)

New Beginnings

Anna Thompson, MS, LPCC NDCA President

Fall is a time of new beginnings and “back to school” is significant in the life of all counselors. For many of the clients we see, it is an exciting time of year – a chance to reunite with friends and colleagues. Parents are eager to see their children off to a new school year, students are looking forward to the variety of activities and for some, it is the excitement of that first year of college or even a new job. Great reasons to celebrate!

As counselors, we cannot forget that in the midst of those celebrations, there are children and adults who are struggling to face what for them are the challenges of learning, socializing, and/or daily functioning. Perhaps you have been reading, as I have, the plethora of articles written these last weeks following the suicide of Robin Williams. The viewpoints are many and I would venture to say that most of them hold some truth about this life or death battle that we struggle to understand.

I tend to agree with Allen White in an article he wrote for [pastors.com](#) entitled “Before Robin Williams Shows Up in Your Sermon, Think Again” and believe his points are fitting for us as counselors. He reminds us to think carefully about our take on suicide, how we present it to those we serve and what we see as “solutions” for this illness. There is such a fine line to walk in our desire to give hope without condemnation of those who have lost the battle. Yet, in this misunderstood and stigmatized illness, we must do something. We must continue to not only raise awareness but equip ourselves with the knowledge and tools

Continued on page 2

needed to provide support to them and to those who love them.

Ryan Thomas Neace makes five important points for therapists in his blog about Robin Williams' portrayal of Sean Maquire in *Good Will Hunting*:

1) Clients see your stuff.

We all have "stuff" and it hurts when others find their way in and start to dig. It is the same for the client. Remember that when you are poking around in their world.

2) Therapy has turning points.

It is often difficult to be warm and candid at the same time – both affirming and confronting a client. The ball must be in their court – you cannot do the work for them.

3) Show clients who you are.

Be your genuine self for when you do, they'll be challenged and when you do, they will also challenge you.

4) You must be an advocate.

By the time the client reaches you it is likely that many others have tried to "fix" the problem. Part of helping people change means impacting the systems around them.

5) Being a therapist (counselor) is totally, totally worth it.

Breakthroughs don't come often but they do come. And when they do, the transformation is remarkable.

The death of Robin Williams has reminded us again that life is very fragile and though we may see laughter, it could easily be the mask of pain. As you head into fall, the season of many new beginnings, do remember that while your professional challenges are many and your work is hard, you – and your clients – are totally, totally worth it.

Calling All Nominators!

Is there someone you would like to recognize for their techniques, ideas, or actions? Please nominate them for a NDCA award! We love to present awards to those who excel in their field.

The outline and the submission forms for the awards listed below are located on our webpage: www.ndcounseling.org under Awards.

Glenn Dolan Award – An individual who has demonstrated able leadership, excellent rapport and service to the community, outstanding contributions to their organization

Innovations Award – An individual who has made innovative contributions in research or published articles in the field of counseling

Friend of Counseling Award – An individual who has demonstrated support for counseling in the state of North Dakota through his/her profession

Outstanding New Professional Award – An individual who has developed an outstanding program and demonstrates exceptional interpersonal skills

Member Emeritus Award – for NDCA members who have retired

Please submit award nominations by December 30, 2014 to: Rebecca Porter, Minot State University, Registrar's Office, 500 University Ave W, Minot, ND 58707 or Fax: 701-858-3386 or Email: rebecca.porter@minotstateu.edu

Rebecca Porter

Pre-Conference in Bismarck

Hello Everyone!!

I hope you all have had a chance to take time to enjoy your summer. I can't believe how long it takes to get here and how fast it's over each year. I have been very busy trying to keep our members informed about the changes taking place in the counseling profession. It seems like a year for change! There have been many changes to keep members involved with including new supervision requirements, meetings about insurance and state issues regarding Medicaid. In March, I attended a public meeting in Valley City about our state's access to mental health services, or lack thereof. The meeting was facilitated by Renee Schulte who was hired to audit our state's services. That final report was shared with our members for their information.

Aside from trying to keep up with the changes happening in our state, we have also been planning for our pre-conference on **Thursday**, February 19, 2015. We have booked Dr. Ed Jacobs to come talk about Impact Therapy and his research. Impact Therapy Associates describes impact therapy as "a theory driven, multi-sensory approach to counseling which recognizes that change or impact comes from not only verbal, but also visual and kinesthetic exchanges. Impact Therapy is an active, brief form of counseling that is very helpful for school counselors, mental health counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other helping professionals." We are collaborating with ND School Counselors Association. The conference will be held at the Career Academy in Bismarck after all the positive feedback we had at last year's conference. Check out Dr. Jacob's website at <http://www.impacttherapy.com/>.

We have also been trying to keep our members updated about employment opportunities, trainings, and events happening around our state through our website, Facebook, and emails. If any of you have something coming up that you would like to share with NDMHCA members, feel free to email me at jennifernico@hotmail.com.

I hope to see you in February!

Jennifer Eberle
NDMHCA President

DIVISIONAL GRANT POLICIES

Any recognized division of the North Dakota Counseling Association is eligible to apply for a grant each year to help with activities of the division, membership information, advertising – whatever the needs are for the division. The divisional grant policies and request form are all available on our website and must be submitted according to the deadlines posted. Remember that a divisional financial statement must also be included with the grant request. The only obligation the division has after the event or project is to submit a written report to the NDCA board and also write an article for FOCUS telling about the activity and the results.

NDCA encourages divisions to apply.

Check it out on the web

www.ndcounseling.org.

2015 NDCA Conference

Preparations for the 2015 NDCA Midwinter Conference are in full swing and we are getting some great breakout proposals so far. We will be kicking off the conference this year on Friday February 20th, and conclude on Sunday February 22nd. With the feedback we received from last year's surveys, we will again be at the Radisson to help to take full advantage of the new location.

Keynote and breakout sessions will be presented by:

Dr. Vincent Pompei, Director of the Youth Well-Being Project for the Human Rights Campaign, addressing local and national LGBTQ statistics and trends

Erin Martz, Director of Ethics and Professional Standards for ACA

Dr. Michele Kerulis, a certified consultant through the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (CC-AASP), and member of the United States Olympic Committee Sport Psychology & Mental Training Registry, Program Director of Sport & Health Psychology at the Adler University in Chicago

Joyce Merter, founder and CEO of Urban Balance, blogger for the Huffington Post and PsychCentral, and selected by Crain's Chicago Business for the "40 Under 40" List of 2010.

Detailed bios and conference agendas will be available soon. Make your reservations today at the Radisson (1-701-255-6000 or 1-800-333-3333) for the new dates Friday February 20th - Sunday February 22nd!

Jason Martozke, NDCA President-Elect

ATTENTION GRADUATE STUDENTS – NDCA SCHOLARSHIP

The NDCA Graduate Scholarship Application will be sent to counseling program advisors at NDSU, UND, MSU-M, University of Mary and NSU-Aberdeen to make available to students by the beginning of October. The updated application will also be available at our website: <http://www.ndcounseling.org/>. The deadline for application submission will be November 13, 2014. Questions about the scholarship may be directed to Melissa Mickelson, Graduate Scholarship Chair at 701-746-2429 or Melissa.Mickelson@gfschools.org. Best Wishes to all of our graduate students in their educational pursuits.

Melissa Mickelson

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