Dr. Robert Witchel was a fan of baseball. He delighted in telling the story of growing up in the same Brooklyn neighborhood as the Torre brothers, both of whom later became major leaguers. In his vast store of knowledge, Bob perhaps knew of George Selkirk, the player who replaced Babe Ruth after he left the Yankees. Everyone knows about Babe Ruth, but few are familiar with George Selkirk.

As I write this opening to the newsletter, I feel a bit like George Selkirk. You see, Bob edited this newsletter for 22 of his 36 years at IUP, and 31 of those years were in the Department of Counseling. I think that this newsletter was a labor of love for Bob and has been a wonderful symbol of what he meant to the Department—the way that he reached out to people, the way in which he applauded people’s achievements, and the joy that he consistently demonstrated in the growth of the Department since 1986. I recall many phone calls from Bob as he came to the closing stages of a newsletter, asking final questions about content or ensuring that he got certain content correct. His pride in the newsletter shone brightly.

Bob passed away on May 3, leaving behind a legacy that is difficult to articulate and will be impossible to match. So many of you reading this newsletter were profoundly touched by Bob, which was echoed in the numerous emails and calls sent to faculty from alumni after his passing. I am convinced of that. I have heard the following comments countless times: “Dr. Witchel was the reason that I came to IUP”; “Dr. Witchel really encouraged me to keep going in the program”; and “I really have Dr. Witchel to thank for what I’ve accomplished.” Those comments hold true for me as well. Over 36 years at IUP, the number of lives that he touched was a remarkable legacy, and I am certainly grateful to be a part of it.

In this newsletter, you will see remembrances of Dr. Witchel. I think they will resonate with many of your fond recollections. He relished in this time of the academic year, particularly in his masterful leadership of the Pittsburgh graduation. In this newsletter, you will find information of those celebrations, as well as the Janet Fontaine Outstanding Student Award, the Spinelli Scholarship recipients, the start of the doctoral program in Fall 2017, and upcoming workshops of the Center for Creativity and Change.

It is a time of sadness within the Department, yet I fully believe that Bob’s presence will be felt in many ways in the years to come…and that brings a smile to my face.

I wish you a pleasant, restful summer. If it includes any baseball, think of Bob.

My best,
Dr. John McCarthy
Remembering Dr. Witchel

From Graduate Assistant to Colleague: Dr. Stacia Carone remembers her mentor, colleague and friend

My first academic counseling job was a faculty member at Morehead State University in Kentucky and my program director, Dr. Bill Weikel, had a funny story about Bob. Bill earned his doctoral degree from the program in which Bob taught. As a joke, Bill and his friends invited Bob to a gathering and told him Don Michenbaum would be there. Bob went to the gathering and began speaking to the person he thought to be Dr. Michenbaum. Bob recalled the story years later at IUP and said, "After a few moments, I realized it was not Don Michenbaum," with a very humorous and endearing tone! Bob’s playfulness and zest for life lives on through many memories.

As a student in the Department of Counseling in the early 90's, I had the pleasure of being Dr. Witchel's graduate assistant and helped him with two federal drug-free schools and communities grants. He was such a supportive supervisor and I learned so much from him ---he and his staff taught me how to use Apple computers! His support continued on graduation day when he took the time to chat with my mom who said her cousin, Ebby, worked at IUP, and Bob said, "I'm wearing his cap and gown!"--what a small world. They had an instant connect! My mom later told me that Bob spoke so highly of me and thanked my parents for sending me to the department. Little did I know that 15 years later, I would be a faculty member in the same department--thanks to Bob’s recommendations and accolades. His laughter and ability to make such meaningful interpersonal connections through his "Gestalt style" will live on in the Department and through the students and people with whom he came in contact.

Dr. Stacia Carone

From Gestalt to the doctoral program: Dr. Kim Desmond remembers Dr. Witchel

I had the privilege of knowing Bob Witchel as a student and a colleague. I can remember Bob teaching me about Gestalt approaches in my very first group theory course. In true Gestalt fashion, he provided opportunities for the class to experience techniques in the here-and-now. In fact, I am still using some of what he taught me in my clinical work as well as in my teachings here at IUP.

As a colleague, my fondest memories of Bob are with the development of the doctoral program. Bob was committed to making the doctoral program a reality for students. He was always among the first to volunteer to help with the tasks necessary for program approval and development. Bob’s attention to detail and ability to project out for planning purposes was unmatched by anyone on the faculty.

I know that Bob’s presence will be felt in the first doctoral cohort starting in the fall. Bob helped me to learn as a student and reminded me as a professor, that being present is the greatest gift we can give to others. It is my hope that these lessons will continue to live on through our counseling students. Bob Witchel will be greatly missed and never replaced.

Dr. Kim Desmond

Dr. Lorraine Guth Reflects on Dr. Witchel's Influence, Impact and Friendship

Dr. Witchel was my dear colleague and friend. I first met him in 1998 during a job interview at IUP. As the Chair of the Search Committee, he was so welcoming, his caring nature was evident, and he was instrumental in getting me to come to IUP. I am most grateful that he has positively touched my life over the past 19 years. Professionally, we worked together on intersexuality research which resulted in an important publication and several national presentations on the topic. We also collaborated on other committees and projects over the years. Personally, I always enjoyed our conversations and appreciated his wisdom, knowledge, and insights. I already miss him so much and it is still hard for me to believe he is gone.

Henry Adams once said, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.” I know that Dr. Bob Witchel’s influence continues to live on through the students, colleagues, clients, and family members who he has impacted over the years.

Dr. Lorraine Guth
The IUP Department of Counseling wants to congratulate our graduates!

Congratulations, 2017 Graduates!

Above: The 2017 class of graduates from the Indiana campus participated in commencement activities on May 13th in Beard Auditorium.

Below: New alumni from Clinical Mental Health Counseling program in Pittsburgh.

Above: Dr. Brittany Pollard (far left) and Dr. Lorraine Guth (far right) congratulate recipients of the Janet E. Fontaine Outstanding Student Award, Julia Araoz (left) and Sara Hoover (right).
Faculty Updates

Branthoover to Coordinate National ACES Conference in Chicago in October

Dr. Holly Branthoover continues working in her position as Conference Coordinator for the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). She is currently gearing up for the 2017 ACES Conference at the Hyatt Regency in Chicago for October 4-8, 2017. The ACES conference attracts approximately 2000 counselor educators and supervisors by offering opportunities for continuing education and networking. As Conference Coordinator, Dr. Branthoover is responsible for the planning and management of the entire conference, including selecting committee members, overseeing proposal submissions and acceptance, creating the conference program, and managing issues around registration, finances, exhibits, and all related conference issues. In her role, Branthoover has also mentored the five ACES regional conference planners for the Fall 2016 ACES regional conferences, attending four of the five regional conferences.

With previous experience in service to PCA and NARACES as well as serving as the 2015 ACES Conference Coordinator, Dr. Branthoover is up for the task. As ACES Conference Coordinator, she has the opportunity to apply her counseling skills in a unique way to offer a significant professional service to the counseling profession.

Dr. Branthoover has also participated in Town Hall presentations at SACES, NCACES, NARACES, and RMACES. At the NARACES conference, Dr. Branthoover presented an education session titled, “Gatekeeping: How to Balance Ethical, Legal, and Administrative Mandates?”

Guth Presents and Publishes Based on Research Conducted in Malawi

Dr. Guth just completed her 19th year in the Department and continues to love her job. She enjoyed a two-year term on the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) leadership team as the Process Observer. Additionally, she is looking forward to teaching the Human Sexuality Issues for Counselors course this summer.

Dr. Guth’s scholarship continues to focus on international counseling and group work. She recently had the following publication and presentation related to her work in Malawi:


Personally, she enjoys spending time with her children and was busy going to hockey and lacrosse games this year. Dr. Guth is also going through the steps to get her dog (Bubby) certified as a therapy dog.

McCarthy on Suicide Prevention and Creative Problem Solving

Dr. John McCarthy’s writing has been published and featured in several journals. McCarthy’s article, titled "Aspiring to Make Suicide a Relic of the Past", was featured as an online exclusive in *Counseling Today Online* in May. The article focuses on the suicide prevention, citing global efforts to reduce the overall rate of suicide.

In the *Journal of Asia Pacific Counseling*, McCarthy’s article on teaching creative problem-solving within counselor education programs, titled "Teaching Creativity: A Look Beyond Counseling," was published in the Spring.

Pollard Presents at Several Recent Conferences

At the American Counseling Association’s (ACA’s) National Conference in San Francisco in March, Pollard presented a session on creative approaches to grief counseling, titled "Language of Loss: Utilizing Creative and Expressive Techniques to Give Grief a Voice".

In April, Dr. Brittany Pollard and two counseling graduate students, Julia Araoz and Kalean Duffy, presented at the Chi Sigma Iota PA Statewide Conference at Marywood University. Presented at this conference were sessions titled "We’re All Connected: Counselor Education and Training in the Digital Age" and "Diving Right In: Infusing Supervision and Basic Skills Training".
Center for Creativity and Change Wins 2017 ACC Award

The Center for Creativity and Change has been named as the 2017 recipient of the Professional Service Award of the Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC). Established in 2004, ACC is a Division of the American Counseling Association that represents a forum on diverse, creative, and relational approaches in the counseling process for counseling students, counselor educators, and counseling professionals. The Professional Service Award reflects promotion of creativity in the practice of counseling.

Dr. McCarthy will accept the award on behalf of the Center at the ACC Conference in Clearwater, FL, on September 9th.

Dr. Jacobs and Dr. Schimmel Deliver the 31st Workshop on Creative Group Counseling

The IUP Center for Creativity and Change recently hosted its 31st workshop, welcoming back the speaker who offered the Center’s first event in Spring 2002. Dr. Ed Jacobs, a Counseling Department professor at West Virginia University (WVU), returned to offer a day-long seminar on group counseling and group leadership in the Pittsburgh area in early March. He co-presented with Dr. Christine Schimmel, also of the Counseling Department at WVU.

Dr. Jacobs and Dr. Schimmel are nationally renowned counseling experts in group leadership and are the co-author of Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills (8th ed.) and of Impact Therapy.

About 40 people—IUP alumni, Department of Counseling students, and area mental health professionals—were in attendance. Dr. Jacobs and Dr. Schimmel presented an interactive seminar, illustrating creative group counseling techniques that can be applied to any group counseling experience.

The IUP Center for Creativity and Change has attracted nationally and internationally known leaders in Counseling in its professional development for counselors and other mental health professionals as well as students. Over 1800 people have completed trainings sponsored by this Center over the past 15 years.

Don’t Miss Dr. John Sommers-Flanagan in October: Tough Kids, Cool Counseling

The IUP Center for Creativity and Change will feature the topic of innovative strategies in counseling teens for its Fall 2017 workshop. The one-day seminar, entitled Tough Kids, Cool Counseling: Innovative Strategies that Lead to Change, will be presented by Dr. John Sommers-Flanagan, professor in the Department of Counselor Education at the University of Montana. The event will be held from 8:30am-3:15pm on Friday, October 13, 2017, at the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit 7 in Greensburg.

Dr. Sommers-Flanagan is a popular keynote speaker and professional workshop presenter throughout the North America. He is author/coauthor of over 60 professional publications and eight books. His books include Tough Kids, Cool Counseling (2007), How to Listen so Parents Will Talk and Talk so Parents will Listen (2011), and Clinical Interviewing (2017). He is also the cohost of the Practically Perfect Parenting Podcast.

This is an event that you definitely do not want to miss!

More information about the workshop and registration can be found on the Center for Creativity and Change’s website or by calling the Center at 412-824-1999. A discounted early bird registration will be available until Friday, September 22.
Student Organizations: CESA and CSI

CESA-Indiana has had a Busy Semester!

CESA-Indiana was busy in the Spring semester with social events, service projects and volunteer work. CESA offers a wonderful opportunity to get involved and feel a sense of community within the Counselor Education master’s program at IUP. Here’s a recap of the successful semester!

In February, CESA members participated in a social event by going to Twisted Jimmies in Indiana, PA. Participants enjoyed dinner together and played some trivia. While they did not take home any prizes, they enjoyed the time socializing and building relationships off-campus. Another social event was held in March, the week before spring break, during the monthly CESA meeting. CESA officers organized an ice cream social, providing all counseling students with a sundae bar. The activity gave students a chance to enjoy some down time together during midterms.

CESA’s Give-Back-A-Thon was also held in March. This month-long event was the organization’s semester service project with CESA members giving their time and money to collect non-perishable food items for a local food bank. Food items were donated to the ICCAP Power Pack Program, which collects food for low-income students within Indiana County so that those students can have basic food needs met over weekends and evenings when not in school. CESA members also volunteered their time playing games with the residents that call St. Andrews Residential Community home. Members enjoyed their time there laughing, bonding, and sharing life stories with the residents and one another.

Want to get involved in CESA at IUP? Find an officer today and ask about how you can join in the fun!

CSI continues to Grow at IUP

IUP’s Iota Upsilon Pi chapter of Chi Sigma Iota has been continuing to work on revitalizing student activities and engagement. This semester CSI planned and executed a number of events, including the "Talk Saves Lives" presentation from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). This presentation took place at Penn Center on February 7th and at the Indiana Campus on April 12th. Students and community members attending the event learned about the warning signs and risk factors of suicide, as well as how people can help to prevent it. CSI wants to thank the AFSP representatives who devoted time to provide this opportunity.

In February, CSI donated a backpack to the “Send Silence Packing” display at the University of Pittsburgh and held a very successful sweatshirt fundraiser. As the semester closed, CSI joined with CESA to host wellness events for students on both campuses. On April 29th, 27 new members were inducted, and new officers were elected for the 2017-2018 academic year.

2017-2018 Officers

President: Rob Bielawski (PC)
Vice-President: Allison Zreliak (Ind)
Secretary: Danielle Witmer (PC)
Treasurer: Cortney Seltman (PC)
Promotions Chair: Rachael Lisica (Ind)
First Doctoral Cohort Starts in the Fall 2017—Still Time to Apply

The Department is pleased to announce that our first doctoral cohort in Counselor Education and Supervision will start at the Indiana campus Fall 2017. There is still time to apply as the application deadline has been extended to June 24, 2017. More information can be found at: http://iup.edu/CounselorEd-PhD.

The PhD is designed as a two-year, full-time intensive program building on student learning and culminating in the dissertation process. Graduate assistantships are available and students will have a paid teaching experience during their time in the program. Cohorts will be admitted annually.

If you are thinking about pursuing your PhD and have questions, please contact Dr. Kim Desmond, doctoral coordinator, at kdesmond@iup.edu.

Congratulations, Spinelli Scholarship recipients!

Congratulations to Lauren Waugaman (Indiana) and Cortney Seltman (Pittsburgh) on being the 2017 recipients of the George L. Spinelli Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded annually to students who excel in leadership and scholarship.

IUP Department of Counseling Faculty

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Still thinking about joining the doctoral program in the Department of Counseling? Contact Dr. Kim Desmond at kdesmond@iup.edu.

Application deadline is June 24th, 2017 for our Fall 2017 cohort.
Your Support of the Department of Counseling

Your Donation Can Make a Huge Impact!

The Department of Counseling at IUP strives to provide the best possible experience for students. We do so by offering a variety of opportunities for development, encouraging students to participate (or even present) at professional and educational conferences, and to pursue coursework or research in other countries. Our faculty, too, pursues a variety of development experiences, so that we can continue to enhance the education provided.

We can’t do it without your help! Your donation to the Department of Counseling can help us to subsidize travel costs and other expenses for students and faculty. That knowledge and experience comes back to you in the form of programs, publications and exposure for IUP.

Donations can be sent, using the form below—or can be made online at www.iup.edu/giveagift. Specify Account Number 4450 in the “Other” field in the donation process, and your donation will be directed to the Department of Counseling.

Donation Form—IUP Department of Counseling

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Alumni - We want to know what you are up to!

We want to know what our alumni are doing - professional activities, publications, presentations, current employment positions, and so forth. If you know of any employment or internship opportunities for our current students, we'd also love to hear from you! And we also want to be sure that we can keep in touch with you to provide the latest news, learning opportunities and networking events.

Send the information below to the Department of Counseling, or email Kelly Montanti at kmontant@iup.edu.

First Name ___________________________ Last Name ___________________________
Email Address ___________________________ Phone Number ___________________________
Year of Graduation ___________________________ Degree ___________________________
Place of Employment ___________________________ Job Title ___________________________

Tell us about your publications, presentations and other news!
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Newsletter Archive—On the Web

You can view this and previous issues of our newsletter in the Newsletter Archive on the Department of Counseling website. Click here for the full archive.

Have a suggestion for the website or the next newsletter?

Dr. McCarthy and his GA maintain the Department website at www.iup.edu/counseling, and will be managing the upcoming newsletters. If you have any feedback or suggestions feel free to email us at jmccarth@iup.edu.